



NAVY NEWS

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TOUR DE FORCE

COUGAR LET LOOSE ON CORSICA

Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade and their French counterparts from the 2nd Infantry Regiment leap ashore from an Offshore Raiding Craft at Solenzara as Exercise Corsican Lion – the first major test of the UK's key Cougar 12 deployment – gets under way. See pages 2-3.

Picture: PO(Phot) Sean Clee, 3 Cdo Bde

DIVERS' WRATH

BLOWING UP BOMBS ON THE RANGE





● A landing craft and a hovercraft move among HMS Bulwark, RFA Mounts Bay (docked down in the centre) and FS Mistral



● Royal and French marines haul a line as a landing craft is loaded alongside HMS Illustrious and (below) HMS Northumberland's helmsman observes flight deck operations on the Charles de Gaulle



Three lions

WELL two actually. And one lion.

The two lions: Corsican Lion, roaring (sorry) into action just as we were going to press, and Albanian Lion, roaring (sorry again) into action this month.

And the lion? (Car)lyon (sorry for a third time) Bay near St Austell, where the UK half of the Anglo-French task force carried out a dry – or rather wet – run before turning for the Med.

Two of three lions have kept the Royal Navy and Royal Marines busy this past month; the third gets under way in Albania imminently as the Senior Service's key deployment of 2012, Cougar, flexes its muscles.

Let us begin in Cornwall, and an action-packed Saturday morning in early October...

THE out-of-season sands of Carlyon Bay were selected as the ideal location for the final work-out for the men and women of the UK's Response Force Task Group and their kit.

It's been 12 months since the Royal Navy and Royal Marines have carried out any large-scale amphibious landings (that was the last run-out for the task group on the previous Cougar deployment).

There is no more complex manoeuvre in warfare than an amphibious assault, particularly when you throw the international element into the equation. Get it right: D-Day. Get it wrong: Gallipoli.

So before there could be any thought of invading Corsica, first the Cougar force had to invade Cornwall. In a gentle fashion, of course.

A 'wader' exercise features all the elements of an amphibious landing – boats, commandos, vehicles, kit, supplies, communications, headquarters – but played out in sloooooow time for safety's sake.

There were some bemused onlookers on the Cornish shore

– not least youngsters (hands in pockets, standing right in front of the Royals – not, generally speaking, a good place to be...).

And they were probably agog – the youngsters, not the Marines – at the very rare spectacle of a wocca-wocca with a giant segment of bridge slung beneath it.

For as well as all the typical wader features, for the first time in a decade – the last occasion was during the invasion of the Al Faw peninsula in Iraq – sappers from 24 Commando Engineer Regiment built an air-transported bridge to allow trucks and other vehicles to roll safely inland.

The four-tonne bridge was pieced together aboard Mounts Bay, before a Chinook lifted the structure ashore – they didn't have to carry the bridge too far (sorry) – where engineers were on hand to make sure it was safe to drive over.

While the bridge was being constructed on the auxiliary, engineer reconnaissance troops had gone ashore to inspect the potential crossing point – a four-metre gap – reporting critical technical details to the planning team of the Response Force Task Group headquarters, based on HMS Bulwark.

Once the correct configuration of the bridge was calculated, 59 Commando Squadron Royal Engineers put it in place.

AND then they dismantled it all and departed for the Med. First stop for most of the ships (with the exception of Illustrious which put into Rota in Spain) was the Rock.

It's been some time since Gib has been buzzing with four visiting warships, plus well over 1,000 sailors and Royal Marines.

Northumberland, Montrose and Mounts Bay berthed against the outer wall of the harbour, with the nation's flagship alongside in the shadow of The Tower, the headquarters of British Forces Gibraltar.

The force was welcomed by the Royal Navy's permanent presence in the small territory: the Gibraltar Squadron. Fast patrol boat HMS Scimitar sailed to greet the incoming vessels – and salute them.

Once alongside, sailors and Royal Marines from the task group ships grappled local sides in the sporting arena.

Bulwark was victorious in the netball by a significant margin, but narrowly missed out to 45 Commando in the rugby.

However, the highlight of the weekend's sporting calendar was the famous Rock Race; over 200 personnel from the Response Force Task Group donned their running shoes (and, in some cases, some colourful fancy dress) and made a dash for the top of Gibraltar.

The 2.7 miles does not sound too gruelling – Bulwark's words, not ours – until the ascent of 1,250ft is taken into account...

After 23 minutes and one second of lung-busting exertions, Mne Hamilton from 30 Cdo (IX) Group RM, part of the reconnaissance team embarked in Montrose, crossed the finish line ahead of all the other Cougars.

Hot on his heels, a mere 40 seconds behind, was Chef Woodley, another Montrose. Completing the frigate's hat-trick, Wtr Emma Holliday was the first female runner across the line (31m 52s).

Not to be outdone F236 lifted the Cougar Trophy on the football pitch at Devil's Tower Camp – the Rock provides quite possibly the most magnificent backdrop of any sporting arena. A cool head from LS(AWW) 'Jan' Bartlett in the penalty shoot-out ensured the frigate overcame the flagship, whose ship's company is much more numerous.

And so to sea once more and the business end of the deployment.

The opening stage of Corsican Lion saw France's flagship

Charles de Gaulle, escorted by Northumberland, off the west coast of the eponymous Mediterranean isle providing the aerial striking power...

...and the amphibious task group of Bulwark, Illustrious, FS Mistral, HMS Montrose, FS Jean Bart and RFA Mounts Bay, plus the green berets and *les bérêts verts* of 9 BIMA provided the boot(ies) on the ground.

In all, the Anglo-French force numbers some 5,000 men and women, lots of firepower in the air (Apaches on Lusty, Rafales and Super Etendards from the de Gaulle) and on the ground (guns of 29 Commando Regiment), and at sea (hovercraft, Offshore Raiding Craft, landing crafts utility and vehicle and personnel, plus the space-age French EDAR boats: fast catamarans which are just entering service).

And whilst impressive when deployed in all its might, anyone standing on the Corsican coast expecting *Il faut sauver le soldat Ryan 2* will have been a tad disappointed.

Storming the Atlantic Wall is probably the general public's *idée fixe* of an amphibious landing.

Except that we've not done anything like that in half a century: we look for a soft spot, an unfortified stretch of coast, well away from the enemy.

The men of 3 Commando Brigade, says their Commanding Officer Brig Martin Smith emphatically, are "not mere cannon fodder as troops can be portrayed in films.

"We will not rush blindly up beaches with bayonets into oncoming fire. We are focussed on well-planned objectives and specific aims which are much more subtle."

As for Corsican Lion, what its early stages taught *les marines* and the marines was that they're not that different.

"Some of our equipment is different but the tactics and



● That's a big boat for one marine... A futuristic-looking French EDAR – Engin de Débarquement Amphibie Rapide (amphibious fast landing craft) – puts a solitary commando ashore on Corsica



pictures: po(photos) sean clec, 3 cdo bde, and ray jones, hms illustrious, la(photos) joel rouse, hms bulwark, dean nixon, hms illustrious and maxine davies, hms northumberland

unleashed

mindset are very similar," says Capt Joel Durbridge RM of 30 Cdo (IX) Group.

"These opportunities bode well for a strong future operating with the French."

Which is exactly what Cdre Paddy McAlpine, the Response Force Task Group commander, found. Once the Bulwark and Mistral forces had converged off Corsica, he made a point of getting to know the new arrivals.

"It's always fantastic to visit ships within your task group to get a feel for their mood – and it's no less important to do so with the French ships under my command," he said.

"I found a very professional, motivated and engaging ship's company on board the Jean Bart – ready to provide the protective umbrella of air defence over the task group while we conduct amphibious operations."

For those partaking in Cougar, it's not just a glimpse of the Anglo-French Combined Joint Expeditionary Force which will be forged by the middle of the decade, but also a glimpse into the future of the RN.

"Working with the Charles de Gaulle is offering a real insight for Royal Navy sailors of how the Response Force Task Group will look when the Queen Elizabeth class carriers enter service," says Lt Cdr Neil Twigg, working in the air operations cell aboard the French flat-top.

Also serving aboard the de Gaulle is 22-year-old Sub Lt Simon Wild, a flight controller from HMS Illustrious who was loaned to the French vessel for Corsican Lion.

"I'm looking at how easily warfare exercises and communications can be integrated – with the emphasis on air operations," he explains.

"The French are highly capable and add a significant amount of firepower to any coalition operation."

NOW rough, tough Royal Marines in full war paint and guns a'blazin' are all well and good, but what happens if they stub their toes or get a splinter in their little finger?

With the UK's casualty treatment ship RFA Argus on hurricane and drug-busting duties in the Caribbean (see page 6), the burden of treating battlefield wounded falls principally on HMS Illustrious' sickbay.

A 16-strong medical team of doctors and specialist nurses, plus a biomedical scientist, have deployed with Lusty for Cougar – drawing on experiences on the front line in Afghanistan and counter-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean when there was a similar facility aboard RFA Fort Victoria.

The team have the ability to treat two very-seriously-injured casualties, who are assessed by the trauma experts, before being operated on in the theatre, then moved to a critical care unit.

It's known in the business as 'role two casualty handling' – providing life-saving care so the wounded can be safely transferred to a hospital ashore to recuperate.

WHILE the 'big ticket' ships like Lusty, Bulwark, CDG and the Mistral grab most of the media attention, smaller ships in the Cougar force have been knuckling down to duties with minimum fuss but maximum effect.

Like HMS Montrose, for example.

The frigate is the springboard for very-low-key missions by the 'pre-landing force' (or PLF) – a combination of Royal Marines, Army commandos and Royal Navy divers – who surreptitiously sneak ashore ahead of the main assault and carry out reconnaissance.

The four-man teams were put ashore up and down the Cornish and Devonshire coasts during the 'wader' phase of the exercises... then did the same once in the warmer waters of the Med.

The PLF only require a small inflatable boat to carry them to and from Montrose – it's so light they can lift it themselves.

Eight PLFs with eight inshore raiding craft joined Montrose for Corsican Lion – with French specialists from Commando Kieffer.

The unit is named after the man who led the assault on Ouistreham's fortified casino on D-Day – famously recreated in *The Longest Day* – and entered Paris on the day of its liberation in August 1944.

Philippe Kieffer is regarded as the father of the French marines – modelling his force on the Royal Marines Commandos.

To this day, Kieffer's naval commandos not only wear a green beret but do so 'British style' – pulled to the right with the badge worn over the left eye... the exact opposite of all other French units, including the mainstream *berets verts*.

Cognisant of the French love for food, the frigate's chefs have pulled out all the stops to satiate their Gallic guests, *curry de poulet* being a particularly popular 'French' delicacy...

All this Anglo-French collaboration was taking place on and around October 21, the most hallowed day in the RN calendar.

The presence of our French allies didn't prevent Trafalgar Day being commemorated by the Cougar force.

Our Gallic friends took events in good heart, pointing out that October 21 was also the anniversary of the *Combat du Cap Lézard* – the Battle of the Lizard – 98 years before Trafalgar when the French routed a Royal Navy convoy off the southern tip of Cornwall (a battle which has evidently been stricken from RN annals – you won't find an entry in the *Royal Navy Day-by-Day*).

So while Montrose toasted the immortal memory, the French celebrated 'Lizard Day'...

THE French connection (sorry one more time) doesn't end with Cougar, however.

Training right now around Toulon is the frigate FS Surcouf and Lynx 217 Flight of 815 NAS which deploy together on pirate-busting duties in the Indian Ocean this month.

The flight will spend four months on Operation Atalanta, the European Union's contribution to the international fight against piracy off the Horn of Africa.

Surcouf typically deploys with a Eurocopter Panther or NH90 NATO Frigate Helicopter on the back. But as a result of growing co-operation between the two navies, she's got a Fleet Air Arm flight onboard.

Beyond the usual pre-deployment training the dozen-strong team – observer/flight commander Lt Mike Curd, pilot Lt Chris Southworth, senior maintenance rating CPO Matthew 'Cakey' Eccles and seven technicians, plus two Royal Marines snipers – have undergone a 15-week language course to improve their French.

And in July some of the Flight plus their bosses at Lynx Helicopter Force HQ in Yeovilton visited Toulon to get to know the Surcouf and meet her commanding officer, *Capitaine de frégate* (Commander) Hughes Laine.

"To be given the opportunity to learn the language and then spend an entire deployment operating with the French Navy is fantastic and my team is very excited, not only to be contributing to counter-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean, but to be doing it in such unusual circumstances," said Lt Curd.

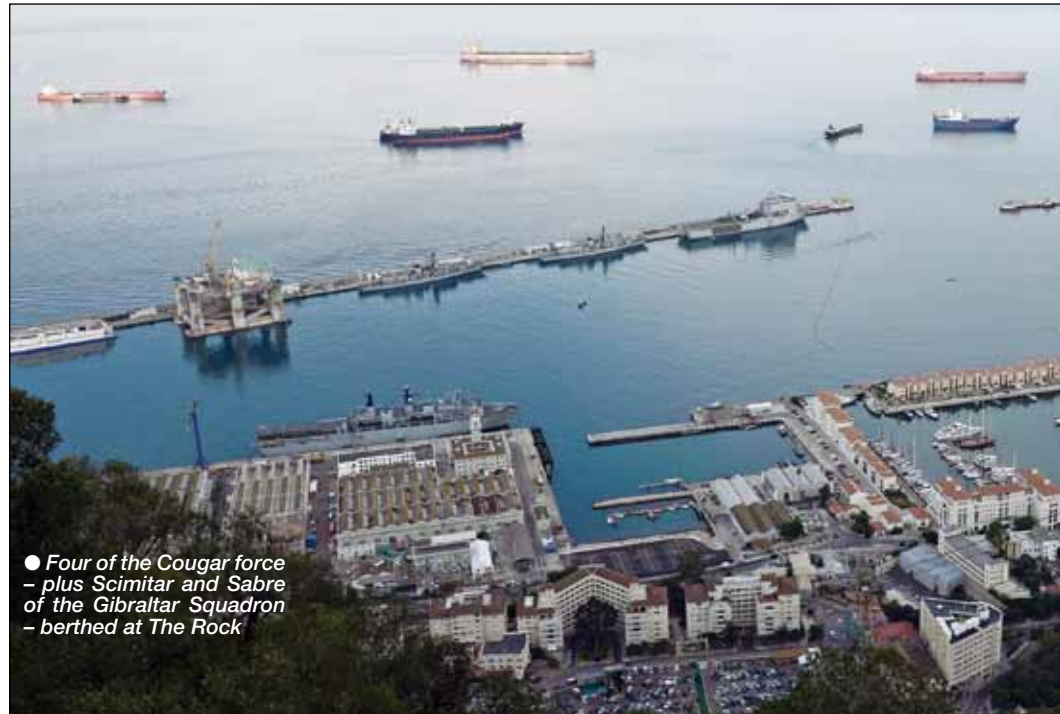
As well as dealing with the piracy scourge, the Surcouf and other EU vessels will provide protection for the United Nations' aid programme delivering food to the impoverished people of Somalia.



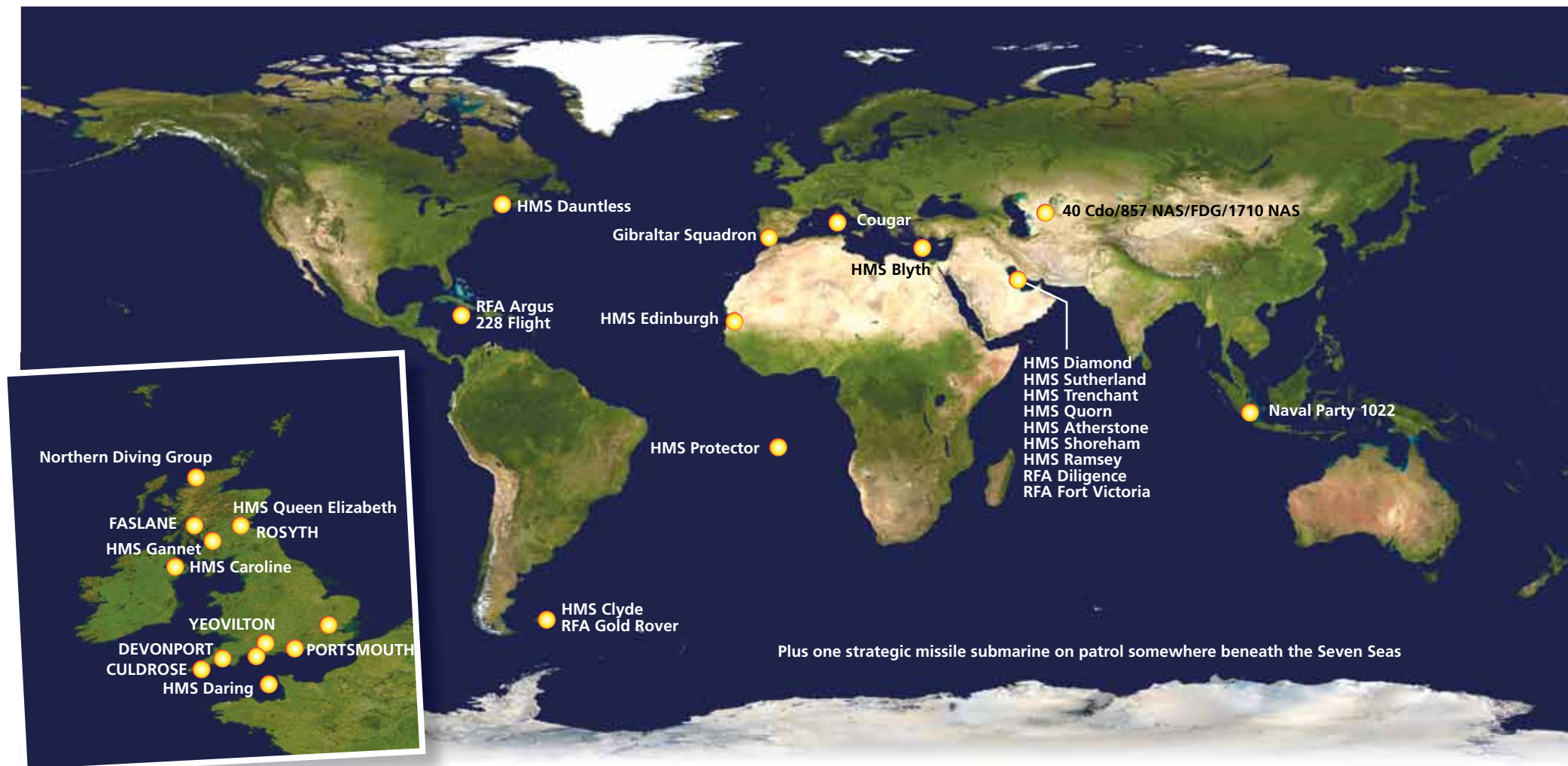
● Offshore Raiding Craft carry a joint force of Royal and French marines ashore at Solenzara on Corsica's east coast and (below) French assault ship Mistral as seen from Lusty's flight deck



● Commando engineers haul a bridge component across the sands at Carlyon



● Four of the Cougar force – plus Scimitar and Sabre of the Gibraltar Squadron – berthed at The Rock



UNLESS you missed pages 1, 2 and 3, you will be well aware that the Naval Service has committed a sizeable force of sailors, Marines and equipment to the marquee deployment of the year – Cougar 12.

HM ships **Bulwark**, **Illustrious**, **Northumberland** and **Montrose**, plus **RFA Mounts Bay**, provide the platform; **814**, **815**, **829**, **845**, **846** and **854** Naval Air Squadrons the aerial support; and **3 Commando Brigade**, **30 Commando (IX) Group**, **45 Commando** and **539 Assault Squadron** – along with their French counterparts – the punch as the task force tested the water off Cornwall before ramping up the action on the beaches of Corsica.

But that is by no means the only show in town.

The steady introduction of the six Type 45 destroyers continues.

HMS Dauntless, one of the world's newest warships, met up with one of the oldest when the second of the D-class destroyers berthed close to USS Constitution in Boston, having just completed multinational exercises in the Caribbean (see p16-17).

Also in that region is **RFA Argus**, visiting various islands and supporting the international fight against drugs-traffickers (see p6).

Back to the Type 45s, and **HMS Diamond** is approaching the end of her first Gulf deployment, and will pass the baton on to Type 23 frigate **HMS Monmouth** (see p7).

HMS Dragon features as our November Ship of the Month (see p12), while her two youngest sisters have both been out to sea – **HMS Defender** under the White Ensign out of Portsmouth and **Duncan** carrying out trials (including a demonstration of her firepower) off the west coast of Scotland (see right).

Before she left the Gulf, **HMS Diamond** also took part in a major minewarfare exercise in the region, alongside HM ships **Shoreham** and **Atherstone** and **RFA Cardigan Bay** (see p14).

And before we leave the subject of destroyers, one of the last two Type 42s was decommissioned – we report on the last days of **HMS York** on p8.

We are always telling you how flexible the Royal Navy's ships are – and the image *opposite* proves that as **HMS Sutherland** refuels from an American supply ship in the Indian Ocean.

Looking to the future, a handful of sailors have been assigned to the future **HMS Queen Elizabeth** – and one junior rate had the honour of being the first to wear that cap tally (see p10).

Older ships also feature quite a few times in our pages this month. Very old ships, to be honest.

HMS Victory, for example – the iconic warship had been the flagship of Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command (one of the Second Sea Lord's aliases) but is now the flagship of the First Sea Lord (see p13).

And Jutland veteran **HMS Caroline** – it has just been announced that the light cruiser is to be preserved in Belfast (see p10).

And **RFA Darkdale** – the tanker was the victim of a wartime attack off St Helena, and her remains have been surveyed by the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship **HMS Protector** (see p10).

The **RFA** has been remembering all the victims of conflict with the unveiling of a new monument at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire (see p10).

In this month of remembrance we also reported on the reinstatement of the memorial to a heroic Royal Marine, **Thomas Peck Hunter**, in Scotland (see p29) and the unveiling of a new monument marking the work and sacrifice of the **COPP – Combined Operations Pilotage Party** (see p13).

Training is also a subject we return to time and again, especially innovative methods. That is certainly the case with the **FATU – First Aid Training Unit** – at HMS Raleigh, which features buckets of (fake) blood (see p8), and the new photo-realistic bridge simulator system at **Britannia Royal Naval College** (see p9).

There was also plenty of valuable training for **Northern Diving Group** divers at Cape Wrath, where they have been clearing unexploded ordnance from the MOD ranges (see p22-23).

And finally, an outsider's view of the work carried out by fisheries protection ships such as **HMS Mersey** is carried on p15, thanks to a report by John Periam of *Fishing News*.



New Defender on trial

LET us hope that the ominous clouds gathered over the gateway to Portsmouth Harbour were not a portent – for this was an occasion of which to be proud.

This was the very first time HMS Defender sailed under the White Ensign as the task of turning the fifth Type 45 destroyer into a fully-trained, fully-honed and fully-armed 21st century man o'war got under way.

Friday September 28 was marked in the diary as the 'ready for sea' date by the powers-that-be after two months' preparation in her home base.

Defender arrived in Portsmouth at the tail end of July, a few days before the Olympics burst into life.

She entered harbour under the Blue Ensign, before the ship was formally handed over to the Senior Service by builders BAE Systems and the flag was replaced by the Royal Navy's famous standard.

As well as readying systems and stocking up on supplies over the summer, gunnery senior rating PO Andrew Cload had been drilling the ship's company in the art of naval ceremony...

...which came in very handy when HMS York made her final entry into Portsmouth.

It's customary for ships to salute each other as they pass – an officer salutes while a rating pipes, normally on the bridge wing or flight deck.

But given York's fine career, the Defenders felt the White Rose warship deserved "something a little extra" – and obliged by lining the upper deck and 'cheering ship': doffing caps and giving three hearty cheers.

Once the formalities were over it was straight back to work in preparation for Defender's trials.

"Taking this state-of-the-art destroyer to sea for the first time is no mean feat and represents the culmination of over two years of hard work for my team," said the destroyer's first CO, Cdr Phil Nash.

"Leaving Portsmouth as planned and on time is a huge achievement and brings the ship another step

closer to deploying on operations wherever in the world we are needed.

"I know my sailors are proud to be part of Defender's first ship's company – I am equally proud of them."

His ship is due to be declared operational early in the new year.

The destroyer's aviation specialists have also been able to get to grips with flight deck procedures for real as Defender operated a helicopter for the first time.

815 NAS from Yeovilton supplied the Lynx Mk8 – as they do for all Type 45s, the lone Type 42 destroyer still active (HMS Edinburgh), some Type 23 frigates and whichever warship or RFA requires a flight.

Any landing at sea, irrespective of the size of the flight deck, is a challenging affair for the aircrew.

But the Lynx trials aboard D36 were principally aimed at testing the ship and her sailors to support a flight, providing everything needed to launch, recover, refuel and look after a helicopter in challenging conditions at sea.

"Preparing for an aircraft to land onto a warship is a task which involves everyone aboard," explained Sub Lt Dan Drew, Defender's deputy logistics officer.

"From the obvious things like planning and executing these operations, to the less obvious such as painstakingly checking the upper deck for debris which could be harmful to the helicopter, everyone plays a part in increasing Defender's capabilities that little bit further."

During the day-long trial, all departments of the ship's company took the opportunity to broaden their training horizons by working with the flight.

Crash boat crews discussed how to rescue the fliers should the Lynx be forced to ditch, the ship's medical teams looked at how casualties could be evacuated by helicopter and even the stokers got in on the act, practising the delivery of aviation fuel.

Duncan goes out all guns blazing...

BACK on the calm waters of the Clyde is Britain's newest destroyer, which has successfully completed a month being thrown around off Scotland on her first series of trials.

The sixth and final Type 45 destroyer Duncan returned to Scotstoun after four weeks of manoeuvring, gunnery and systems trials.

The destroyer – designed as a replacement to the veteran Type 42s to shield the Fleet from air attack – reached a top speed of over 30kts (34mph) on speed runs, and a 'fun' 16° heel to one side during a high-speed turn, testing not only the stability of Duncan, but the balance of her mixed civilian and RN crew.

After proving she could manoeuvre deftly, Duncan shifted from the enclosed waters of the Firth of Clyde and environs to the exposed Atlantic by heading up to the ranges around Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides.

There she fired all her guns successfully – 4.5in main, 30mm, miniguns, machine guns – and flashed up her combat systems at sea for the first time.

"This was the first time the ship has been to sea and we've achieved everything we set out to do – and more," said Cdr Phil Game, Duncan's senior naval officer.

"This success is down to the great teamwork between the RN, BAE and MOD in building Duncan.

"Everyone involved in the building of Duncan can be justly proud of her. And I think our namesake, Admiral Duncan, would be proud of what we as a ship's company have achieved so far as we bring our ship to life."

Duncan boasts a little over 70 members of her ship's company – just over one third of the full complement of 190 Royal Navy officers and ratings who will crew her when she's in RN hands.

A second spell of sea trials is lined up before winter back alongside at Scotstoun to add the finishing touches.

Duncan is due to sail for Portsmouth around Easter, when she'll be officially handed over to the Royal Navy by builders BAE and hoists the White Ensign for the first time.

Five marines face murder charge

FIVE Royal Marines have been charged with murder over an incident in Afghanistan in 2011.

The five commandos are accused of “committing a criminal offence contrary to section 42 of the Armed Forces Act 2006, namely murder”.

It is alleged that the commandos murdered an unknown Afghan national in September last year.

Nine marines from 3 Commando Brigade were arrested by the Royal Military Police in connection with the alleged incident, with four released without charge.

The incident followed an action with an insurgent; there were no civilians involved.

The five accused appeared before Colchester Military Court on October 22 where they were released back to their unit until a plea hearing on December 10.

An anonymity order, bars the identification of all five defendants. Public disclosure of their identities, or any information that might lead to their identification – in the media, on the internet, or by any other means – would constitute contempt of court, and carry criminal punishment.

Second F35 begins tests

THE second of the Navy’s – and nation’s – next-generation jets has arrived at its combat test centre in Florida for evaluation.

Whitehall has bought three prototypes of Lockheed Martin’s Joint Strike Fighter, with the first, BK1, already at Eglin Air Force Base in north-west Florida, undergoing tests.

It’s now joined by ZM136, which was flown from Fort Worth in Texas to its new home by RAF Sqn Ldr Jim Schofield – the JSF will serve with both the Air Force and Fleet Air Arm.

The Florida base is being used by the US Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy as well as the FAA and RAF as the training and evaluation ground for the strike fighter, which is also known as the F35 Lightning II.

When combat ready, the jet will be the first ‘fifth generation’ fighter in the world, operating in the UK’s case from land bases (probably RAF Marham) and HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.



Pre-season training

WE KNOW they’re always stressing how flexible a Type 23 frigate is, but this is ridiculous.

This a very bendy HMS Sutherland – as seen from close to the top of her 996 radar mast, where LA(Phot) Ben Sutton was precariously perched while the ship took on fuel from the aptly-named US Naval Ship Supply somewhere in the Indian Ocean.

And if you look closely, off Supply’s starboard beam, Arleigh Burke destroyer USS Nitze, is also receiving black gold from the 48,000-tonne support ship.

Sutherland took on fuel to sustain her patrol of the ocean as the south-west monsoon season drew to a close – and with it the ‘pirate season’ was expected to resume.

To that end, a small, specialist Royal Navy team based in Dubai has reinforced efforts to warn mariners of the dangers posed by 21st Century buccaneers. UK Maritime Trade Operations, based in Dubai, comprises nine Royal Navy personnel plus one Merchant Navy, advises merchant shipping of the principal threats, which stretches of ocean to avoid, and liaises between civilian shipping and the international force of warships patrolling ‘Pirate Alley’ (between Somalia and Yemen) and the wider Indian Ocean.

The concerted effort by the navies of the world to clamp down on the pirate menace – NATO, the EU and the 27-nation Combined Maritime Forces

are all committed to the effort – as well as precautions taken by merchantmen (three out of four British or UK-flagged ships passing through the region now carry armed security teams) have seen the number of attacks drastically fall.

Last year 131 attempts were made to seize ships – but the pirates only succeeded in 23 instances.

So far in 2012, there have been 54 hijack attempts. Only six boats have been taken over, with five still in the hands of pirates.

In all, five merchant ships and seven fishing vessels/dhows with some 200 crew as hostages are currently being held for ransom.

To ensure more do not fall victim, the UKMTO sends out a flood of information to shipping in the region, its staff brief merchant ships in harbours such as Jebel Ali – the largest port in the Middle East – and holds regular conferences for merchant shipping leaders and mariners, like one just held at Dubai’s International Seafarers Centre.

“During the meeting we covered a lot of ground and it was heart-warming to see how far this united approach to piracy has come,” said the UKMTO’s Lt Cdr Sue Roll.

“It was excellent to interact so effectively with the maritime stakeholders in the region.”

In the case of the Fighting Clan, she’s splitting her time between counter-piracy and counter-terrorism patrols as she enters the final two months of

her deployment, monitoring and inspecting merchant traffic.

Most physical inspections are ‘reassurance visits’ – informing lawful seafarers of why the Royal Navy and Royal Marines are here and to understand the ‘pattern of life’ among the heavy shipping traffic in the region.

Whether it’s a friendly visit, or a full-on pirate take-down, the procedure for Sutherland is the same: up with her 829 NAS Merlin – callsign Warlock – with its commando snipers in the back, and a green (RM) and blue (RN) boarding team on the water in the ship’s Pacific 24 sea boats to physically carry out the act of boarding.

It’s tense, it’s relentless, and it’s very demanding physically.

“Having experienced temperatures of up to 48°C I never thought I’d miss Cornish rain so much,” said Flight Commander Lt Earl Kingston who’s normally based at Culdrose.

“The crew and engineers have done an outstanding job keeping us airborne.”

Proof of the international effort was provided when Sutherland joined forces with Canadian frigate HMCS Regina, also committed to the impressive maritime security mission.

Six members of the Fighting Clan, er, clan traded places with their counterparts aboard the Regina to see how a navy which was born out of the Senior Service 102 years ago does things.



Pirate-snatcher and mine-hunter hailed

A ROYAL Marine major who helped to capture more than 30 pirates during a concerted surge by UK forces last winter was among 13 members of the Naval Service recognised in the latest operational honours announced by Whitehall.

Maj Adam Whitmarsh, 33, served as the chief-of-staff of the UK’s counter-piracy task group based on RFA Fort Victoria which proved highly successful in the autumn and winter of 2011-12; successes including freeing a Pakistani dhow and Italian merchant vessel in October 2011.

Both crews were liberated by Royal Marines commandos with the pirates captured and sent for prosecution in Italy and the Seychelles.

In the case of the Italian vessel MV Montecristo, the pirates had taken over the vessel; her crew had retreated to an impregnable ‘citadel’ aboard and although safe were effectively trapped.

They were liberated when the commandos moved in.

“It is always a nerve-racking moment watching the Marines board a ship because you never really know what might await them.

“In this case the pirates very quickly gave themselves up and were subsequently sent to Italy for prosecution.”

Overall, the counter-piracy operation

- disrupted the actions of seven pirate groups
- freed 43 sailors held hostage
- handed over 36 suspects to the Italian and Seychelles authorities for prosecution
- seized two dhows, two whalers and six skiffs

“The job satisfaction from this deployment was immense – we went out there to chase down pirates and keep the sea lanes safe and that is exactly what we did,” said Maj Whitmarsh, who has been awarded a Queen’s Commendation for Valuable Service for his actions.

Also recognised is Lt Cdr Phil Dennis, made an MBE after two back-to-back operations in charge of minehunters in the Gulf.

First he commanded HMS Middleton for seven months in Bahrain before returning to the UK. Then three months later he sailed back to the region, this time in command of her sister ship HMS Quorn.

He had also previously spent time on the staff of the UK Maritime Component Commander, the senior RN headquarters east of Suez – bringing his total time in the Gulf region to 20 out of 36 months.

Lt Cdr Dennis, who was deployed to Middleton just two months after marrying his wife Holly, a fellow RN officer, said he was both delighted and surprised by his honour.

“I was totally made up,” he said.

“I told Holly as well and she was very very proud – it was something I had not been expecting but it was a real honour that someone thought to nominate me.

“After I had returned from Middleton and the call came about returning to the Gulf with Quorn it was something I had not been expecting, but that is the nature of Service life.

“I would say that I am just extremely lucky that I have a very understanding wife who knows how the military operates.”

Full honours list, pages 32-33

Viking reborn

A NEW breed of Viking warriors is coming – as the Royal Marines’ armoured vehicles get a £37m revamp for front-line operations.

Over the next two years all 99 Vikings in the commandos’ inventory will be revamped, giving them added protection against the threat of mines, and returned to their original amphibious state – having spent several years on operations in Afghanistan. The firepower of some Vikings will also be bolstered, fitting new guns and mortars.

The tracked vehicles, based with the Royal Marines’ Armoured Support Group at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset, have been in service with the green berets since 2005.

The Vikings were deployed to Afghanistan the following year, supporting not just the Royal Marines, but also Army operations on the ground; they’ve since been replaced in theatre by Warthogs.

The vehicles provide improved protection for crews and troops being carried over the similar BVs which have been operated by the Corps for a couple of decades.

The £37m deal signed with BAE Systems will see the Vikings shipped to the small town of Örnsköldsvik in eastern Sweden, where constructors Hägglunds will rebuild the vehicles one-by-one, provide the latest mine-protected v-shaped underbodies – offering greater protection should one drive over an improvised explosive device – overhaul the brakes and suspension and carry out other modifications.

Nineteen Vikings will be fitted with top-mounted guns and nine will be altered so they allow Royal Marines to fire their 81mm mortars from the vehicle.

The overhaul of the entire Viking fleet is due to be completed by the end of 2014, allowing the vehicles to serve with the Corps beyond 2030.

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40's banner flies over Nar-e-Saraj

THE standard of 40 Commando flutters over Main Operating Base Price with the Royal Marines now in charge of the Nar-e-Saraj district of Afghanistan.

The base will serve as the hub of operations for the Norton Manor green berets and their Danish allies until spring as the 17th phase of the British mission in Helmand, Operation Herrick, begins in earnest.

The commandos have moved some 650 men and women from the UK to Afghanistan, where they relieved 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards.

During the six-month tour of duty, the marines' mission will change as Afghan forces increasingly take the lead and 40 Commando become a supporting force, building on the achievements of the Grenadier Guards.

The marines' domain covers a large area of central Helmand through which the strategically-important Highway 1 runs and where the second largest city and main economic centre, Gereshk, is located.

The formal transfer of command of Combined Force Nar-e-Saraj (North) saw the soldiers' flag lowered and 40 Commando's hoisted in its place in the presence of senior officers from both units, plus Danish Team 14.

"I could not be more pleased to be handing over this important mission to such a palpably capable unit," said Lt Col James Bowder, 1 Grenadier Guards' Commanding Officer.

"I have been hugely impressed by what I have seen of the 40 Commando team, and I am confident that they will do a brilliant job consolidating the gains of the last eight months and driving forward the transition process."

In reply, 40 Cdo's CO Lt Col Matt Jackson said the guardsmen had put tremendous effort in to making the district "a better place for the Afghan people to live and enabling the Afghan National Security Forces to thrive."

"Due to their hard work the Afghan forces have taken on more of the security tasks as part of transition and we are able to take on a more supporting role."

The Royal Marines commander added: "40 Commando has been set for success and we understand the responsibility we have. The prospect of the Afghan forces taking the lead for security in more areas displays the tremendous progress that has been made and I am proud to be able to support them in this."



Caribbean odyssey

NOW there's a sight to evoke memories of the Royal Navy in the '80s and '90s.

Capt Gerry Patterson grabs his binoculars on the bridge wing of RFA Argus to take a closer look at BNS Greenhalgh – once HMS Broadsword – in the Caribbean Sea.

The aviation training and casualty treatment ship was on a drug-busting patrol when she bumped into the Brazilian frigate by chance.

The latter ship has recently completed an international exercise off the Florida coast, working inter alia with new destroyer HMS Dauntless.

The fortuitous encounter allowed the two ships to sail close together, permitting the exchange of light and sound signals, and a dip of ensigns.

Several members of Argus' ship's company still retain fond memories of serving in Type 22 frigates – which served from the late 70s until early last year when the final quartet of Cumberland, Campbeltown, Cornwall and Chatham paid off under the 2010 Defence Review.

Broadsword was the first of 14 Type 22 frigates built for the Royal Navy from the mid-70s until the

end of the 1980s.

She was damaged in the bitter duel with Argentine jets off Pebble Island in the Falklands in 1982 – an action which saw HMS Coventry sunk.

After 16 years' service, including peacekeeping duties in the Adriatic in the early 1990s during the break-up of Yugoslavia, she was paid off in 1995 and sold to the Brazilian Navy.

As for Argus, her recent duties have been a mix of counter-narcotics patrols, ceremonial events and stand-by to assist UK territories in the Caribbean should a hurricane strike (the season runs till the end of this month).

The ship spent five days in Trinidad and Tobago, coinciding with the island's independence celebrations.

Sailors were invited to march in a late-night independence parade, passing through the streets to the Port of Spain's main square where a Union Flag was lowered and the Trinidadian flag raised.

Events continued the following day as Capt Patterson and other officers attended an even larger parade featuring contingents from the Trinidad Navy, Coastguard, army, fire service, police

department and prison officers.

The display included a fly past from four Trinidad helicopters as well as drill displays performed to a unique reggae beat. Proceedings concluded with a 21-gun salute, but performed with buried mines rather than rifles or artillery.

While in Trinidad and Tobago, members of the ship's humanitarian aid and disaster relief team were deployed to an area of the island that had recently suffered significant floods with loss of life.

The team spent time digging storm ditches and clearing debris so that future heavy rains should not result in the same dramatic levels of flooding.

Next stop was Montserrat for two days of disaster management planning and discussion with local teams.

The island is no stranger to natural disaster, having suffered both catastrophic hurricanes and volcanic eruptions in the past 20 years.

Much was learnt by both the ship's company and the local management teams, and firm plans for how the ship could help the island if required were laid down.

During the brief visit, Argus' 815 NAS Lynx flew several sorties over the island, carrying

out an aerial survey of the ground inside Montserrat's exclusion zone; the aircrew also identified several illegal drug plantations for investigation and destruction by the local police force.

Following on from the visit to the volcanic island, Argus sailed on to St Kitts and Nevis, once part of the British Empire, now independent.

Further discussions regarding the ships potential role in assisting in any natural disaster were held, and again the ships company had the opportunity to march in an independence parade.

Braving the 30°C heat, the marching platoon proved a popular addition to proceedings and was (literally) warmly welcomed.

The final port of call for Argus this past month was the French island of Martinique – regarded as a part of France, so much so that it uses the Euro as its main currency.

The ship enjoyed another warm welcome, this time from the French Navy stationed on the island, and had a very successful few days meeting the local population and reaffirming strong ties with our foreign cousins before sailing to continue her patrol of the Caribbean.

In between these port visits, the ship has continued her counter-drugs work with a specialist US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment embarked.

Diamond's bird of praise

HMS Diamond demonstrated her boarding expertise with the United Arab Emirates frigate Murayjib in the Gulf – one part of a larger international training exercise, Falcon Warrior.

Officers from the UAE Navy were welcomed aboard the Portsmouth-based warship, where they received a brief from the ship's company on what Britain's newest operational Type 45 destroyer can do and a brief on the Royal Navy's practice of boarding operations.

In a typical boarding scenario Diamond's Lynx helicopter from 815 NAS appears overhead and circles as the destroyer bears down on a suspect vessel.

As Diamond draws near, her sea boats are put into the water, racing to the target at 40kts, carrying the mixed Royal Marines/Royal Navy boarding team.

Diamond remains close and the helicopter provides additional protection in the form of a commando sniper team and heavy machine gun.

If the teams are required to board a suspect vessel, they do so in accordance with international law and carry out a search for evidence of illegal activity, questioning the crew in an effort to combat smuggling, piracy and other criminal activities on the high seas.

Helmet cameras worn by some of the boarding team, similar to those carried by Royal Navy police and civilian constabularies back in the UK, provide a record of an investigation which can be used later in any criminal proceedings.

"We demonstrated how the Royal Navy and Royal Marines conduct boarding and our Emirati colleagues shared their first-hand local knowledge to enhance our understanding of the area," said Cdr Ian Clarke, Diamond's Commanding Officer.

"These exercises are essential in ensuring that ships can all work together effectively with a common understanding of procedures."

Diamond is due to complete her maiden deployment next month.



'A really special person'

A ROYAL Marines officer with two decades of experience and service to his country died of natural causes at Bagram Air Base near Kabul.

Father-of-three Capt Carl Manley, who had completed several tours of duty in Afghanistan, died on Monday September 24.

His wife said of the loss of her 41-year-old husband:

"To us, Carl was the loveliest husband and father. We can't imagine life without him; we are so very proud of him and everything he has achieved, both professionally and for the family."

"Always smiling, he never had a bad word to say about anyone. Everything he did was selfless, at work and at home. The world has lost a really special person."

His Commanding Officer said Capt Manley had served his nation with dedication and courage for more than twenty years.

"His combination of ferocious work ethic and humility ensured that he made a sustained contribution to operations on this and his previous tours of Afghanistan."

"A highly-valued Royal Marines officer, he will be missed by all those who worked with him."

Gunnery and gaming merge at Collingwood

A SIMULATOR which fuses the latest military hard and software with the gaming world has opened at HMS Collingwood.

The Close-Range Training Section is used to teach marksmanship in the use of all upper deck guns bar the main 4.5in 'Kryten'.

The facility features a 30mm and 20mm cannon, four Miniguns and four General Purpose Machine-Guns which can be 'fired' individually or together in ten bespoke training serials.

The scenarios have been designed by experts at defence research firm QinetiQ, who merged their software with 'off-the-shelf' code in the form of Virtual Battlespace 2 and current gaming technology.

The new facility took fewer than 12 months to design and build and was opened by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel – his first official duty as the new incumbent of the post.

The admiral, in charge of all training and personnel matters in the Senior Service, is a logistician and lawyer by trade, but tried his hand at gunnery with the 20mm and Minigun (a manually-controlled Gatling gun), dispatching a fast inshore attack craft using the latter.

BRNC installs new bridge simulator, page 9

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Blyth heads NATO force

HMS Blyth has taken charge of a four-strong force of minehunters prowling the Med.

NATO's Mine Counter-Measures Group 2 broke up in the summer once exercises in the Black Sea had concluded.

After some time as a 'lone wolf' and a spell alongside in Toulon, Blyth sailed for Naples as the force re-formed, this time comprising the Sandown plus Italy's ITS Viareggio, Turkey's TCG Ayvalik and German mine hunter FGS Grömitz.

Once formed the small force put to sea to get to know each other – and each other's slightly different practices – before they knuckled down to the task of hunting mines and other duties.

Blyth was joined for this stage of her deployment by Fleet Commander Admiral Sir George Zambellas, who gave positive and strong advice on how he expects RN and NATO forces to confront modern-day operations in constantly-changing scenarios.

The first big test for the minehunters was Noble Mariner 12 – the latest in a long-running series of large-scale NATO exercises, this year staged in the Middle Sea with ten of the 28 nations in the alliance providing ships, submarines and personnel.

The main aim of the exercise was to test not the ability of the individual ships in their specialist fields such as anti-submarine warfare or minehunting, but the art of commanding and communicating with such a varied international force.

Aside from Noble Mariner, Group 2 is continuing its training around the Med and is due to take part in a NATO 'surveillance surge' aimed at better understanding the security environment the ships operate in.

'Fully-prepared' Black Duke sails

THE Sailor King stands watch as the Black Duke leaves the safe waters of the Hamoaze bound for the troubled waters of the Middle East.

HMS Monmouth left Devonport to begin a seven-month stint east of Suez, taking over from destroyer HMS Diamond.

Her principal mission is to patrol the Gulf and work with the UK's allies and friendly navies in the region.

The frigate's also due to conduct counter-piracy/smuggling/drug and people-trafficking patrols once through the man-made waterway between the Levant and the world beyond.

She goes there with 215 souls aboard – including a Royal Marines detachment to carry out board and search operations, plus a Lynx Flight from 815 NAS.

Following an intense period of pre-deployment training, the ship's company spent their final week in Plymouth stocking up on stores to see them through their time away.

As well as additional ammunition and machinery spares, they have loaded large quantities of Christmas decorations and games to boost morale whilst away – it'll be spring before they're back in Devon.

"Every one of us is very proud to do the job we chose, even if that means being half way around the world protecting our country over Christmas," said AB(CIS) Nick 'Errol' Flynn.

"It will be very hard being away from loved ones, friends and families, particularly as this is my first major deployment, but the command do their best to help us keep our spirits up with welfare support, time off and

time ashore when they can."

His CO Cdr Gordon Ruddock added: "Monmouth departs the UK fully-prepared to carry out our important task – and any additional tasks given to us by the government."

"After a demanding period of training and work-up, my ship's company are eager to make a contribution to enhancing the security and stability in the region."

As for the Sailor King, well the statue of William IV (also known by the other, rather unfair, nickname of Silly Billy) stands next to the covered slip in Devonport's South Yard.

It's actually a fibre-glass replica of the original statue, a figurehead removed from the 'ship of the line' HMS Royal William when she was converted to steam power around 1860.

Picture: LA(Phot) Rob Gillies, FRPU West



'pool's flight honoured

NAVAL aviators in the thick of the action off Libya last year have been rewarded for their deeds.

Lynx 217 Flight of HMS Liverpool came under fire from Gaddafi's guns, called in fire missions for the destroyer's main 4.5in gun and scoured the Gulf of Sirte for small boats intending to lay mines in the approaches to the besieged port of Misrata.

Those actions earned the air and ground crew the coveted Osprey Trophy – presented each year to the Lynx Flight which contributes most to front-line operations.

In the case of 217 Flight, the helicopter was airborne for more than 270 hours on Operation Unified Protector duties thanks to Herculean efforts by the small band of maintainers (just seven strong), pilot Lt Alistair Crawford and his observer/flight commander Lt Phil Barron.

Together they ensured the Lynx was available for missions 94 per cent of the time.

"It was a brilliant team effort," said Lt Crawford. "The Fleet Air Arm is often in the forefront of operations that have a maritime dimension."

"Liverpool's role was key to many of the successes in the allied operations. It is vital that helicopter operations are an integrated part of the ship and our flight was involved in the thick of it throughout."

All of which meant 217 Flight were very worthy winners of the Osprey Trophy, presented by Fleet Commander Admiral Sir George Zambellas when he visited Yeovilton.

The Osprey Trophy was introduced in 2007 in memory of four members of HMS Portland's Flight who lost their lives in a Lynx crash off the Lizard Peninsula in December 2004.

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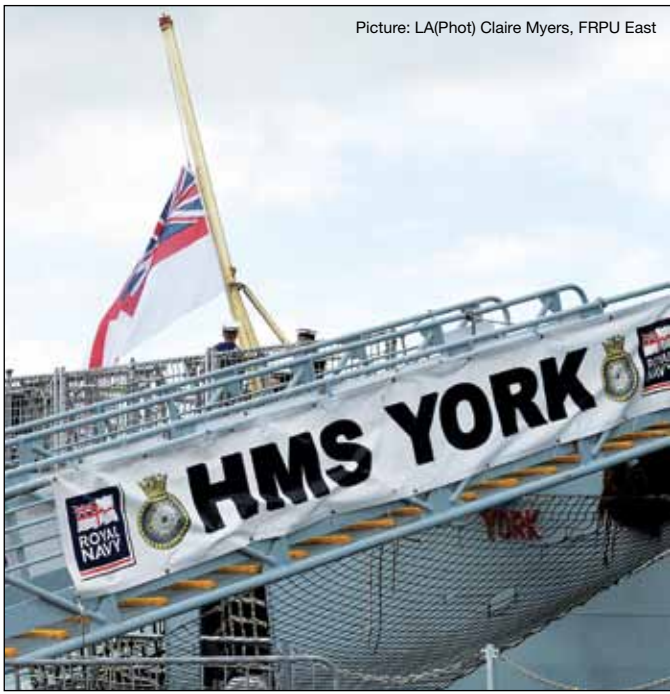
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Picture: LA(Phot) Claire Myers, FRPU East

'Say farewell to a distinguished lady'

THERE is no more symbolic – and heart-wrenching – act in the end of a British warship's life than the lowering of the Royal Navy's legendary standard.

Thus did Her Majesty's Ship York pass from present into history as she was decommissioned in Portsmouth Naval Base at the end of September.

Not only is this pretty much the end of the York story, but also almost the end of the entire Type 42 story; only one of the famous class of destroyers, HMS Edinburgh, is now still with us.

For York, 750,000-plus miles sailing the world's oceans concluded with a ceremonial final entry to her home port followed, seven days later, by a service of decommissioning.

Among the guests were ship's

sponsor Lady Gosling – who launched York in 1982 – former commanding officers, families of the 240 ship's company and dignitaries from the ship's namesake city.

"Throughout her life it has been the people, the members of her ship's company, who have made HMS York what she is," her final CO Cdr Rex Cox said.

"We say goodbye to our great ship in style and in the finest traditions of the Service.

"It is time to say farewell to a distinguished lady who has been both a home and a way of life to so many.

"We shall miss her, however rather than being sad we should look to her numerous achievements and celebrate her 27 years."

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• A rather startled CH Lynsey Hellier helps a 'shot' colleague to safety in the FATU trainer at Raleigh

Picture: Dave Sherfield, HMS Raleigh

THERE WILL BE BLOOD

ABOVE the monotonous roar of engines, the jarring tone of the klaxon and the rush of gas escaping from smashed pipes, there are screams for help.

"Get me out of here. GET ME OUT OF HERE. Look at this mess."

A stoker stands in a doorway impaled on a wooden beam. His shipmate lies in a corner of the compartment, his guts spilling out. Through the hatch, a junior rating lies in her bunk in agony, her lower legs shattered, while acrid smoke swirls around.

The gloom is pierced by shafts of light as torches fixed to helmets scan the surroundings: senior and junior rates' messes, a machinery compartment.

Help is here.

"How are you, buddy?" one sailor asks. Another tends to the man with stomach wounds. "I'll be back in two minutes with more help. Hang on in there..."

And then the lights go on. And the tumult stops. It's all a drill. Phew.

But for 30 minutes, it's all frighteningly realistic in the mock-up innards of a warship at FATU – the First Aid Training Unit – at HMS Raleigh.

Each week, at least a dozen sailors – from able seamen fresh from training to hoary chiefs the wrong side of 40 – pass through the unit to improve their medical skills.

Why? Don't ships have surgeons and medical assistants?

They do – but in the event of a major incident, they're going to be pulled from pillar to post. You're most likely to rely on the sailor next to you for help before the experts arrive.

"The magic or golden hour is crucial for survival, the first ten minutes – 'the platinum ten' as we call them – especially. They really make the difference," explains PO(MA) Craig Hainey, FATO (yes, really – First Aid Training Officer... and no-one ever

takes the micky. Honest.)

Every sailor and Royal Marine is taught the basics of first aid. One in three must undergo the week-long more advanced course (the official title is the rather-uninspiring 'CBRN 23' because it's No.23 in the many courses which fall under the banner of disaster training such as fire-fighting and saving a holed ship), and one in ten the even more thorough course.

As a result there's a course pretty much every week passing through. The first three days are spent learning the theory, day four the bloody practice: first in the replica ship, then outside where a Wessex helicopter has crashed on a main road and a Metro and Astra have crashed into the back of it.

Whilst the outside scenario lacks the noise and claustrophobia of the mock-up ship, it makes up for it in blood. Lots of blood. Buckets of it. Literally.

Instructors have great fun spreading it around. A bucket is poured over one poor volunteer to simulate a pelvic wound, another is thrown into the Wessex's cabin to simulate, well, carnage.

Just for good measure, some of the casualties have blood-filled syringes to replicate severed arteries, and instructors wander around with pump-action water pistols stocked up with blood for the full-on Hammer Horror effect.

The blood, for the record, is food colouring mixed with corn, Vaseline and water. The only evil thing about it is removing it: cold water and some strong detergent are required; a hot shower merely opens the pores in the skin and allows the red to seep in further. Other tricks of the trade include lollipop sticks to replicate bones sticking out, a fake chest covered with lacerations and what looks like a prawn cocktail smothered in ketchup for the gut wound.

"It is a false environment, but turn the lights off, put the smoke generators on, the noise, the cries, it puts you into that world,"

says Craig.

Indeed it does. The 17 students treated the exercise as if it were real. After recovering the casualties from the disaster area, they laid them on the quarterdeck or, in the case of the impaled stoker, propped him up against an upturned chair.

Every few minutes, depending on the severity of the injury, pulse and breathing rates, plus pupil dilations were checked and AVPU observations – whether casualties were Alert, responded to Verbal instructions, responded to Pain or were Unresponsive – recorded, ready for the professionals to take over.

"It's quite an intense morning," said AB Barry McWilliams, a reservist with HMS Hibernia. "I'm more mechanically-minded. I'd really rather see an engine gushing away than a body. You are shown some pretty visceral images during the course.

"The skills taught are incredibly useful. Rather than standing there and watching in panic, you can help out and get stuck in."

For 19-year-old CH Lynsey Hellier from Bracknell, about to join her first ship HMS Montrose, the training was a bit of shock to the system.

She said: "During basic training you're told that you'll learn first aid, but I didn't expect anything like this – just minor injuries. You tell yourself: 'this won't happen to me'. But then you realise: 'I have to deal with it.'"

"The course is really interesting and actually quite enjoyable, but the exercise is disorienting and nerve-racking – apart from the odd visit, I've never really been on a ship before."

The facility, says Craig, is FATU's "party piece. It's heavily used – and incredibly useful.

"The important thing is giving the right treatment at the right time. If the person standing next to you is first-aid trained, your chances of survival are so much greater."



WIP @ BRNC = PM

PRIME Minister David Cameron took the salute at the spiritual home of the Royal Navy's officer corps as the first batch of cadets to undergo the new Initial Naval Training Course at Britannia Royal Naval College passed out.

Of the 256 Royal Navy personnel on parade, 68 completed the training they began back in February.

Mr Cameron inspected the successful cadets, watched by their families and friends.

He told those gathered outside the famous red-brick college overlooking Dartmouth that the Royal Navy was "absolutely fundamental to our security as an island nation.

"And it's a vital part of our heritage. The challenges you face over the coming years may place demands on you experienced by few others of your age in the world today.

"Despite the technology of today, being in the armed forces is an intensely human business. It is based on personal relationships and the ability of people like you to lead your fellow men and women, even in the face of danger.

"And there is no greater honour than that a nation can bestow than the trust to lead your fellow men and women. That is the task you will have. Your training here has given you the best possible start."

Picture: LA(Phot) Rob Gillies, FRPU West



Bridging the reality gap

THIS is the distinctive skyline of Portsmouth Harbour at dusk with the Spinnaker Tower brilliantly illuminated. Except it's not. In fact, this is Dartmouth and the most advanced bridge simulator in the Navy which has just been installed. The upgrade to the replica bridge at Britannia Royal Naval College features photo-realistic recreations of key harbours such as Portsmouth and Plymouth, immersing trainee naval officers, budding navigators and experienced ship's teams in an almost-real world as they hone their ship driving skills safely on dry land. There are four bridge simulators to train navigators and bridge teams – two at HMS Collingwood and one each at Dartmouth and Faslane – all of which have been in use for several years.

It's the photo realism of the upgrade to the BRNC trainer which takes the training to the next level. "Whereas in the past you'd just see a row of houses, now they're specific buildings," explains Lt Sam Stephens, head of navigation at Dartmouth. Such as the distinctive Wilton Hotel on Plymouth's Grand Parade. It's painted gold – like the real thing – and you can clearly read the lettering. The same goes for the Spice Island Inn in Portsmouth. Portsmouth Harbour is the *pièce de résistance* of the upgrade. A graphics specialist from the simulator's developers Transas spent five days photographing every aspect of the waterfront and environs – by day, and night. It means that in the dark, Gunwharf with its myriad bars and restaurants, lights up, as does The Lipstick (officially

No.1 Gunwharf Quays). The waters reflect this neon world, as well as the yachts in the marina and HMS Warrior. Such features aren't just 'nice to have', say the Dartmouth staff, but important in making the training as realistic as possible – which in turn means students get more out of it. "The graphics are fantastic, much more realistic – they really capture you. You forget that you're not in Plymouth or Portsmouth," says Lt Simon Preece, on the BRNC navigational staff. The simulator – which features the front section of a generic warship's bridge, plus giant display screens in a 180° arc to recreate the outside world – is powered by the equivalent of ten high-spec gaming computers. The system can also recreate a

lookout's view through binoculars, while the 'ship handling' characteristics – length, beam, displacement and the like – perfectly mirror most classes of ships in the Fleet (the main exception presently are the new Type 45 destroyers). As well as locations and harbours, which can be loaded in a matter of seconds (the Portsmouth Harbour file is 630 megabytes – enough data to fill a CD), the computer recreates pretty much all sea and weather conditions one of Her Majesty's Ships might encounter: driving rain or snow, hurricanes, sandstorms, fogbanks. That's not to say that the simulator is perfect, or ultimately, a substitute for the real thing. It struggles with very heavy seas (winds of Force 10 and above) and especially waves over the bow. Turn it down a few notches to 6 or 7 and the realism returns.

"I sat at the back of the room and watched a group of senior officers on a command course swaying around," says Lt Stephens. "Some people have even asked if it's on hydraulics. It's not. It simply tricks the mind." As well as giving cadets their first taste of guiding a ship safely through the Seven Seas, the BRNC simulator is used by bridge teams of Devonport-based ships to practise leaving or entering tricky or unusual harbours, plus 'rules of the road' and officer of the watch manoeuvres, while warfare officers undergoing their initial training will spend around 30 hours on the sim. "You can run through any scenario on here that you wouldn't want to try for real – it's a safe environment – as well as everyday manoeuvres, such as replenishing at sea, navigating in fog or poor weather conditions," Lt Stephens adds. Picture: Craig Keating, BRNC



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Breathing life into the Queen

WRITER Claire Butler carefully fixes a black and gold tally bearing the name 'Queen Elizabeth' to her cap – the first such tally in 64 years.

Right now it's the only one, for the 29-year-old is the sole junior rating assigned to the first of the Royal Navy's next generation carriers.

Claire was one of eight sailors to join the nascent flat-top in Rosyth, all on the same day, and with a singular aim: to breathe life into the future flagship.

Queen Elizabeth now has a senior naval officer, Capt Simon Pettit, an Executive Warrant Officer, WO1 David Smith, to look after all the ratings (numbering four at present), and small departments responsible for marine engineering, weapon engineering and logistics.

It's a couple of years yet before the 65,000-tonne ship puts to sea and four years before she's handed over to the Navy.

As the youngest, most junior and only female member of the ship's company to date, there was a lot of media interest in Claire especially.

"Becoming the first member of the Royal Navy to wear this cap tally is a fantastic honour," she said.

"My main task will be to help set up the routines and procedures that will help the rest of the crew to do their jobs.

"We are all well trained and as a team will make sure this warship becomes operational and safeguard the world's oceans."

When the carrier is fully operational at the end of the decade with an air group of F35 Joint Strike Fighters, Merlins and possibly Chinook and Apaches, there will be upwards of 1,600 men and women on board – ship's company (circa 600), squadron personnel and battle staff.

"I am privileged to be charged with bringing the Royal Navy's future flagship to life," said Capt Pettit.

"Queen Elizabeth will be at the heart of the Royal Navy for the next 40 to 50 years and will ensure that we can protect the UK's interests wherever in the world successive governments wish to send her.

"I am proud to be in charge of the small-but-rapidly-growing team and I know that everyone of my crew is also proud to be breathing life into this wonderful ship."

While the first sailors were joining QE, another giant section of the carrier was being prepared for transport to join the rest of her at Rosyth.

Four hundred and fifty remote-controlled transporters were used to move the 11,300-tonne aft section, known as Lower Block 04, from a shed at Govan in Glasgow and on to one of the two largest sea-going barges in the world.

Weather permitting, the section is due to travel the 600 miles around the top of Scotland, leaving the Clyde on November 3.

Picture: LA(Phot) Geri Halliwell, FRPU North

Comment, page 24



**The Royal Navy & Royal Marines
Children's Fund**

Registered Charity No. 1075015
PART OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

**The RN & RM Children's is a National Charity
based in Portsmouth. We care for children
of men and women who have served or are
serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.**

<p>Originally set up as an orphanage, we now assist children with a wide range of needs and at times of family crisis.</p> <p>Applications can be made at any time. Those seeking assistance can contact the office direct for an application form.</p>	<p>Monique Buchanan or Lauren Smith RN & RM Children's Fund 311 Twynford Avenue Portsmouth PO2 8RN Telephone: 023 9263 9594 Fax: 023 9267 7574 Email: enquiries@rnmchildrens.org</p>
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'Not a piece of stone, but a place of memories...'

SALUTING sacrifice past and present, the official and honorary heads of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary join more than 150 people as the memorial to the Royal Navy's vital lifeline in times of war and peace is dedicated.

This is the new national memorial to commemorate all members of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary who have died while serving on operations around the world in the Service's 107-year existence.

The monument at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire honours two dozen

RFA ships where lives have been lost in the line of battle.

That roll of honour begins with RFA Thrush in 1917 and ends with RFA Sir Tristram and Galahad in the Falklands in 1982.

Addressing the assembled crowd the Earl of Wessex, Commodore-in-Chief RFA, said that the monument was "in memory of all those who have and who will serve – and a place for the families to visit.

"It is not a piece of stone but a place of memories."

The head of the Service, Cdre Bill Walworth, Commodore RFA, added: "The arboretum is a wonderful location and I am pleased we are dedicating an RFA memorial that is well designed, reflects our service, and sits beautifully in the peace and tranquillity of the park."

The RFA Association, which includes former and serving personnel among its members, helped to raise more than £30,000 to pay for the monument.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Hillhouse, FRPU East

Light shed on Darkdale

CLEARLY broken in two, these are the remains of a Naval tanker seen as never before after seven decades on the Atlantic seabed.

This is the wreck of RFA Darkdale, sunk in just five minutes off the tiny island of St Helena in October 1941.

Seventy-one years later, ice patrol ship HMS Protector returned to the spot Darkdale went down in James Bay to survey the remains of the tanker using her suite of the latest sonar technology.

In 1941, St Helena served as an important staging post in the war against the U-boat in the South Atlantic.

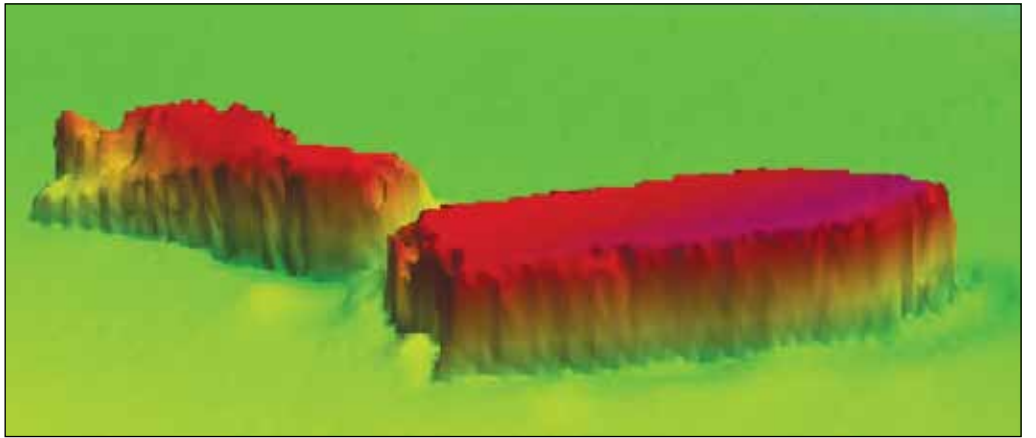
Darkdale arrived off the island that summer, providing fuel for passing Royal Navy warships such as carrier HMS Eagle and cruiser HMS Dorsetshire.

The tanker was anchored off the island's capital Jamestown on the night of October 21-22 when she was struck by at least three torpedoes fired by Germany's seventh-highest-scoring U-boat ace, *Korvettenkapitän* Karl-Friedrich Merten, in U68.

Darkdale exploded, turned over and sank almost immediately, taking 41 men aboard down; only two men who were on deck and blown clear by the blast survived.

The wreck may still hold a substantial amount of fuel oil which, if discharged, could have a significant environmental impact on the island.

The wreck is currently being



examined by the salvage and marine operations arm of the MOD's Defence Equipment and Support organisation to assess the state and potential environmental impact.

The accurate positioning of what remains of the tanker will be used for any future monitoring and salvage work that may be required.

As is tradition in the Royal Navy, time was also taken to hold an act of remembrance over the wreck, after Protector's divers had revisited the wreck to lay a Union Jack on it.

"It was a great privilege to be able to play a small part in remembering those that played such a big part in making Britain and the Royal Navy what it is

today," said LD Chris Hayes.

During her short visit, the ship also took the opportunity to carry out further bathymetric and shore survey work in the Jamestown area, including an entire circumnavigation of the island which will help to produce more up-to-date charts, making it safer for other ships and boats to visit.

Capt Peter Sparkes and his crew of 65 also took the opportunity to host the island's dignitaries and give a tour of the ship to a group of local children.

And there was time for the crew to step ashore, visit the local tourist hot spots, such as Napoleon's residence in exile, climb the 699 steps of Jacob's

Ladder and sample some local hospitality.

The football match between the ship's team and islanders resulted in a thumping 8-0 defeat for the 'Ice Men'.

Protector is bound for Antarctica to spend a second Austral summer surveying the waters around the frozen continent and providing support to scientists.

Before her first stint amongst the ice she called at Simon's Town in South Africa to carry out last-minute maintenance and work to ensure the 5,000-tonne icebreaker is ready for the rigours of Antarctica.

From Simon's Town, Protector was due to pay a courtesy visit to Tristan da Cunha, surveying the waters around the island, before moving on to Antarctica for her first work period.

Jutland veteran faces restoration

THE last surviving warship of the Battle of Jutland will be preserved for the nation in her native Belfast – and hopefully returned to her Great War prime.

Cruiser HMS Caroline is the only one of 151 Royal Navy ships which clashed with the Kaiser's High Seas Fleet in the North Sea on May 31 1916 still with us, serving as home to Belfast's naval reservists for more than 85 years.

Now the goal is to make her one of the centrepieces of the city's Titanic Quarter after the Ministry of Defence donated the 98-year-old warship to the National Museum of the Royal Navy – which means it can bid for funding to preserve her.

The Northern Ireland government has set up to £100,000 aside to begin immediate remedial work with the ultimate aim of allowing the public to look around her as a tourist attraction – and reminder of the age of headnoughts and the Grand Fleet.

After WW1 she became headquarters of the Ulster Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve – forerunner of today's RNR – in 1924.

That was a duty performed until the end of March last year, when she was finally decommissioned, since when reservists have met in Lisburn on the edge of Belfast.

As for Caroline, she's stayed in Alexandra Dock, just 500 yards from where Titanic was built, while her fate was determined.

There was talk of moving her to Portsmouth to join other famous vessels in the Historic Dockyard, but in the end the decision was taken to keep her in Belfast – something welcomed by the province's trade minister Arlene Foster.

"HMS Caroline is part of the fabric of Belfast and she is also an integral part of our maritime history. The ship is of outstanding national significance and has huge potential as a visitor experience," she said.

"The announcement is great news as it means we will be able to begin the process of bringing HMS Caroline back to her former glory.

"Fully restoring and preserving the ship will require significant funding and, to that end, we have had positive discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund."

Caroline has undergone some modifications in her RNR role – classrooms and a drill shed aft of her three funnels, the forward boiler room is a ladies' gym, and the cruiser's guns were removed – but much of her hasn't changed since her fighting days.

Veterans' minister Mark Francois said given her history, Caroline had to be saved – hence the decision to donate her to the museum. "This is one of the most historic fighting ships in the world, one which played a role in a battle which was decisive in the outcome of WW1."

SHOULDER
TO SHOULDER
WITH ALL
WHO SERVE

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



How to train your Dragon

AND it doesn't require the son of a Viking blacksmith in a mythical world.

It does, however, require a team of experts in all realms of war at sea – damage control, engineers, logisticians, navigators, gunners, warfare officers, leaders. (© Navy News laboured intros 2012...)

And it's rather less fun (but considerably more important) than an animated feature.

It's also going on right now. Somewhere off Plymouth.

The 190 souls who comprise the ship's company of HMS Dragon are in the throes of Operational Sea Training – two months of very intensive instruction, likened by some in the RN to 'pre-season training' (the 'season' begins in the spring when D35 heads out on her maiden deployment).

For added 'fun' the ship emerges from OST and goes straight into a 'mini-OST': Directed Continuation Training.

OST prepares a ship's company for every eventuality – fire, flood, submarine or air attack, disaster relief and so on.

DCT is bespoke training aimed specifically at a ship's impending deployment: if you're off to the Caribbean, how to carry out counter-narcotic ops; if you're off to pirate alley, well you get the picture...

All of which will take the fourth of our six Type 45 destroyers up to Christmas.

Post the festive season there'll be some maintenance to ready for her six months away, plus some extra kit added.

All in all, it's been a pretty



● Dragon acts as the guardship at a unique sail past celebrating the 150th anniversary of the P&O line on a very murky summer's evening in the Solent

Picture: PO(Phot) Simmo Simpson

memorable year for the Type 45 community (three ships deploying for the first time, five handed over to the RN, all six at sea).

Dragon's 2012 has been no exception. Commissioning. First visit to her affiliated city of Cardiff. First visit to Belfast. And Liverpool. First Sea Viper firing. The RN's main representative at an impressive sail past to mark P&O's 150th birthday.

By the time her first tour of duty comes around (and for security reasons we can't tell you where it will be yet), Dragon should also

have a new and proud affiliation to her name.

With HMS York (just) decommissioned, this new destroyer is taking over some of the ties of the old 42, chief among them the link with Yorkshire's county town.

The ship can trace her heritage back to the reign of Henry VIII and the first of 16 previous Dragons (or variations on the name including Red Dragon and Dragon Prize).

Some never made it beyond being ordered, some were renamed

before they were launched.

And some made their mark on history. Notably the 15th Dragon, a late WW1 cruiser which helped the Baltic nations establish independence from the Russian yoke in the aftermath of the Soviet revolution. A generation later the ship was heavily used on escort duties, first in the Atlantic, then in the Far East before being transferred to the Polish Navy as ORP (*Okret Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* – Vessel of the Republic of Poland) Dragon.

She supported the Allied

invasion of Normandy, pounding German targets around Juno Beach on D-Day, and was due to support the capture of Caen on July 7 1944 when she was mortally wounded by a German human torpedo. The ship was eventually sunk as a breakwater off Courseulles-sur-Mer.

Dragon No.16 would have been one of the class of famous post-war Daring-class destroyers, but was named Decoy – a name not resurrected when the Ds returned with the Type 45s, although Dragon was...

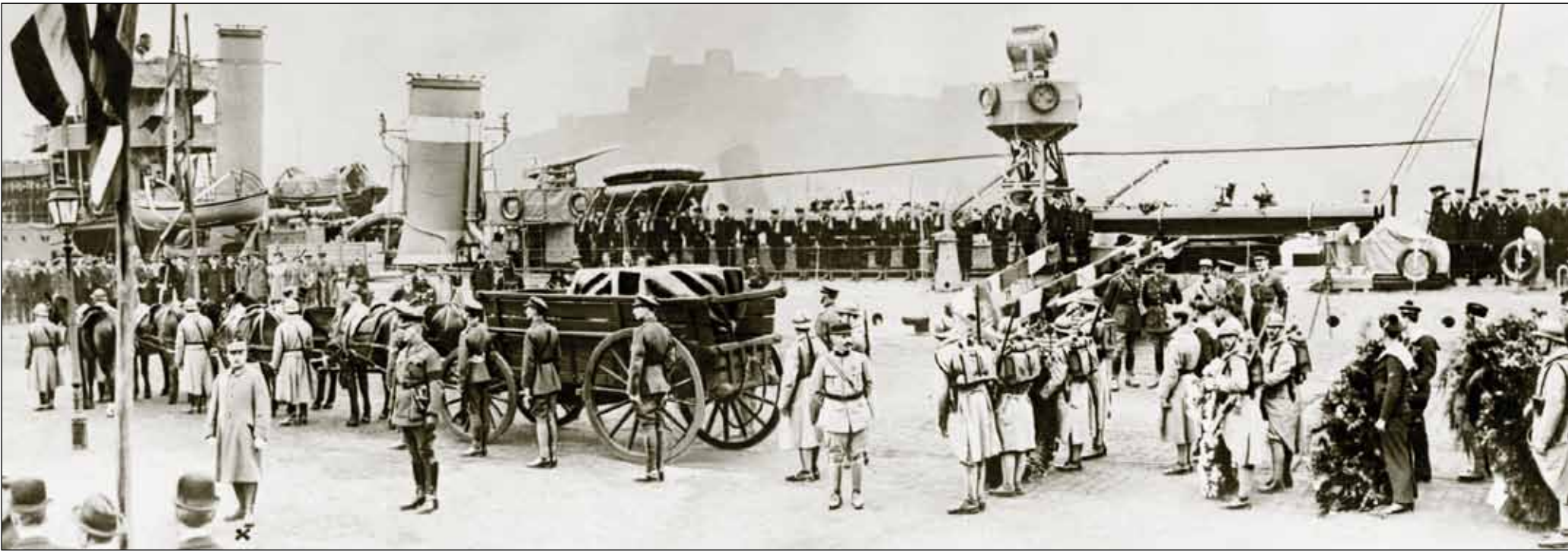


Portland	1653
Gabbard	1653
Scheveningen	1653
Lowestoft	1665
Four Days' Battle.....	1666
Orfordness	1666
Bugia.....	1671
Barfleur	1692
Belleisle.....	1761
Martinique.....	1762
Havana.....	1762
Egypt.....	1801
Baltic.....	1854-55
Arctic.....	1944

Class: Type 45 destroyer
Pennant number: D35
Motto: *We yield but to St George*
Builder: BAE Systems
Laid down: Dec 19 2005
Launched: November 17 2008
Commissioned: April 20 2012
Displacement: 8,500 tons
Length: 500ft (152m)
Beam: 70ft (21.2m)
Draught: 24ft (7.4m)
Speed: in excess of 30 knots
Complement: 190 (can accommodate up to 235)
Propulsion: 2 x Rolls Royce WR21 gas turbines;
2 x Wartsila diesel generators;
2 x Alstom electric propulsion motors
Armament: Sea Viper anti-air missile system featuring Aster15 and Aster30 missiles held in SYLVER launcher;
1 x 4.5in Mk8 main gun;
2 x 30mm guns;
2 x Phalanx automated Gatling guns;
Surface Ship Torpedo Defence system
Helicopter: 1 x Lynx or 1 x Merlin



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES



WITH a guard of honour lined up on the deck of HMS Verdun, a gun carriage draws to a halt at Boulogne's Quay Chanzy.

Among the Tommies and *poilus* on the Channel port's jetty, Ferdinand Foch, Marshal of France and the man who finally led the Allied armies to victory over the Hun.

On the gun carriage: half a dozen barrels of hallowed ground from the Western Front – and the remains of one symbolic British soldier, the Unknown Warrior, about to return home.

In this month of remembrance, our dip into the photographic holdings of the Imperial War Museum takes us back to shortly before midday on Wednesday November 10 1920.

The Great War had yet to earn the (unjustified) tag of 'futile' which has hung around its neck since the 1930s.

But the physical and mental scars of the 'war to end all wars' were still far from healed.

The war cost Britain 880,000 dead; her Empire more than 1.1m.

Many of the fallen on the Western Front had no known graves. In an age long before cheap and easy foreign

travel, other battlefields were beyond the realm of most bereaved: Gallipoli. Iraq. East Africa. China.

The modern word is 'closure' – and for hundreds of thousands of Britons there was no hope of it.

Which is where the idea of the tomb of a nameless warrior came in.

In 1916, Army chaplain Rev David Railton had been struck by a simple cross erected in memory of a fallen comrade near the town of Armentières, and in particular by the inscription upon it: *An unknown British soldier*.

Railton believed a similar tomb in Westminster Abbey might offer comfort to grieving families. He suggested the idea to Douglas Haig, Commander of the British Expeditionary Force. Haig did not respond.

The Dean of Westminster, however, did, and passed the idea on to Prime Minister Lloyd George, who also gave his support.

Except that by the time plans for the Tomb of an Unknown Warrior were beginning to find favour in Westminster, the enduring national symbol to the war dead, the Cenotaph in Whitehall, was almost complete.

A temporary structure of wood and plaster was being replaced by the permanent monument we know today. It would be dedicated on Armistice Day, 1920.

As far as George V was concerned the simple, rather austere monument would suffice. Many of the public shared the king's view. Such an almost mawkish memorial would "never appeal to the British".

And yet the idea persisted. With little more than a fortnight to go until November 11, the decision was finally taken to press ahead with the Unknown Warrior.

Despite the short timescale, the resulting plans were elaborate. Six battlefields where British soldiers – and personnel of the Royal Naval Division – fought were visited by special details and four (or possibly six) bodies exhumed.

The remains were carried to a hut in Flanders, where they were laid under Union Flags, awaiting the arrival of the British Army's commander in France, Brig Gen L J Wyatt.

Wyatt may, or may not, have been blindfolded. His choice was definitely

random.

The chosen body was placed in a coffin, the rest were reinterred. It was transferred under full honours to Boulogne's mediaeval castle, where the Unknown Warrior was moved once more, this time into a casket made of oaks from the grounds of Hampton Court. A sword from the Royal Collection was fixed to the top and a plaque attached bearing the words: 'A British Warrior who fell in the Great War 1914–1918 for King and Country.'

The next morning the lugubrious strains of Chopin's *Funeral March* filled the streets of Boulogne as children and soldiers accompanied the warrior on his journey to the harbour.

Verdun, escorted by half a dozen warships in mid-Channel – their White Ensigns at half-mast – carried the warrior to Dover where the ship's arrival was greeted by huge crowds and a 19-gun salute.

From Dover, a train carried the coffin to the capital in a luggage van – the same van which had once carried the body of nurse Edith Cavell, executed by the Hun for helping prisoners to escape Belgium.

At each station on the route to London Victoria, platforms were filled with onlookers. The scenes in the capital when the train arrived shortly after 8.30pm bordered on the hysterical.

The coffin spent the night under guard in the carriage.

Its 80-minute final journey by gun carriage the next day took it past the new Cenotaph – where the king adorned the coffin with a personal wreath – and on to Westminster Abbey for a service of dedication.

At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the Unknown Warrior was laid to eternal rest beneath six barrels of that hallowed continental soil and a slab of Belgian marble.

Within a week, one in every five Londoners – more than one million souls – had paid their respects. Despite earlier misgivings, the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior most definitely did appeal to the British...

■ THIS photograph (Q 70591) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@IWM.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



● A typical example of the ship's badges painted at the old dockyard site in Bermuda – in this case, that of HMS Opportune

Bermuda badges disappear

A QUIRKY piece of maritime history has been lost with the continuing redevelopment of the old Royal Naval Dockyard site in Bermuda – but they have been preserved in photographs.

Dozens of hand-painted ship's badges which adorned walls and buildings have been destroyed as the area is cleared.

The badges – some more accurate and artistic than others – date back over 50 years and were created by sailors from visiting RN and allied warships, and have been added to and cleaned up right up to the present day.

But with the closure of the dockyard and later HMS Malabar, the area fell into disrepair.

Realising the historical value of the badges, investigations were made into saving them, but that proved impractical.

"The ships' crests have been painted on the walls of the southern part of the South Yard of the Royal Naval Dockyard at Bermuda, probably from 1951 at the earliest," said Edward Harris, Executive Director of the National Museum of Bermuda.

"It was at that time that the dockyard was downsized after World War 2 into that area, which represents about one-tenth of the area of the dockyard as it was at its fullest extension in the war.

"New security walls were erected for what became the final working area of the Royal Navy at Bermuda, and those walls were made of concrete block, which may date as early as 1951, or perhaps later.

"Perhaps half of the crests are painted on concrete block walls, which would be almost impossible to take apart without destroying parts of the crests and the blocks themselves.

"Other crests are painted on the walls of buildings, which are either of concrete block or soft Bermuda limestone blocks – the latter also presenting the most difficult of tasks to take apart, as they are individual blocks and not, say, a sheet of painted plywood.

"This is a type of transient art that most likely cannot be preserved by removal to another site, where one would somehow have to make sense of them in a new architecture setting, as well, even if one could cut them out of the existing walls in a large block for each crest.

"The crests have been professionally photographed on behalf of the National Museum and thus as historical data, they have been preserved for posterity.

"That is perhaps all that can be sensibly done with this particular set of heritage objects."

www.bmm.bm

First Sea Lord takes over 'new' flagship

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope has seen his flag hoisted at HMS Victory in a handover ceremony with the new Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral David Steel.

Earlier the outgoing Second Sea Lord (2SL), Vice Admiral Sir Charles Montgomery, had stepped down from his duties after 37 years of naval service.

Trumpets sounded at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard before the handover ceremony on board Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Trafalgar.

Members of the Royal Marines School of Music performed *Auld Lang Syne* in a farewell ceremony for the outgoing 2SL before the new 2SL formally handed over his flagship to First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

It was as Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command – another of 2SL's titles – that Vice Admiral Montgomery flew his flag in Victory, but defence reorganisation means that the title no longer exists.

As Admiral Stanhope retains full command responsibility, Victory will now become his flagship – though Vice Admiral Steel will also take on the title 'Admiral in charge of HMS Victory', retaining some of 2SL's old duties.

Admiral Stanhope said: "It is a great honour for me to hoist the Flag of the First Sea Lord in HMS Victory.

"It also reflects the increased role that the First Sea Lord now plays in the running of the Royal Navy from the headquarters in Portsmouth."

Vice Admiral Steel said: "I'm stepping into quite a similar role because I was the deputy to the Second Sea Lord for quite some time.

"I've obtained good knowledge of Portsmouth because I was naval commander here between 2005 and 2008. I have a great love for this city."



● Outgoing Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Charles Montgomery (left), First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope and new Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel (right) salute on board HMS Victory

Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan

Engineering new career paths

THE first conference on 'Future Naval Engineering: A gender perspective' is being staged at HMS Collingwood this month.

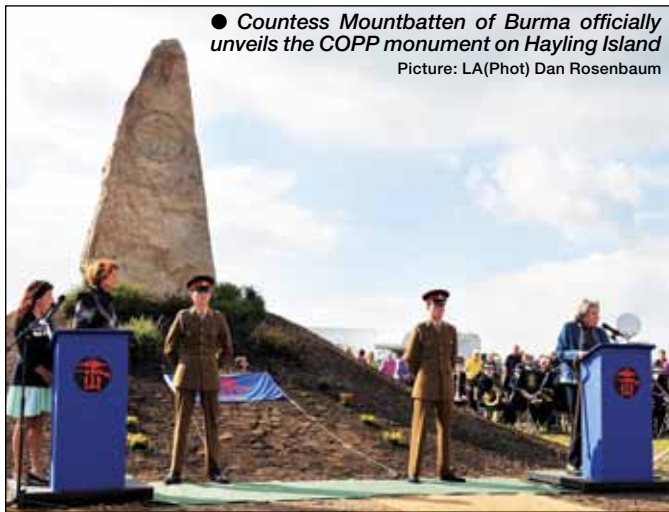
The event will explore some of the issues affecting men and women in their roles as engineers, from career structure to childcare.

Among those taking part will

be representatives from Director Naval Personnel, the Naval Families Federation and QinetiQ.

The conference takes place on November 15 and is open to all serving RN and RNR Engineer Officers, WOs and SRs.

Application forms can be found at 2012DIN07-133.



● Countess Mountbatten of Burma officially unveils the COPP monument on Hayling Island

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum

Monument lionises secret warriors

AN elite group of men who paved the way for success on D-Day have been honoured with a monument in Hampshire, dedicated in the presence of today's military leaders.

The Chief of Defence Staff and the head of the Royal Marines led tributes to veterans of COPP – the Combined Operations Pilotage Party – who carried out secret missions in the run-up to Normandy.

COPP units played a key role in saving thousands of lives during World War 2 by reaching enemy-occupied invasion sites and gleaned vital information.

The forerunners of the Special Boat Service, the Special Forces arm of the Royal Marines, they marked out the navigation channels for landing grounds at D-Day in 1944.

Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir David Richards said: "As an organisation they were unique.

"Taking risks in paddling miles from the relative safety of a ship or submarine to the dangers of enemy-occupied territory in two-man teams, they proved their courage time and again.

"Their exploits were relatively secret at the time but now should be remembered with great pride."

The unit was created by Lord Louis Mountbatten in 1943 after the failed Dieppe raid the previous year and was based at Hayling Island Sailing Club.

Perhaps the most important mission was carried out on the last day of 1943 when a team was sent to reconnoitre a beach in Normandy, taking samples back

to the UK for experts to analyse.

The sands they surveyed would become Gold Beach on D-Day.

And while D-Day is an episode and date which everyone knows, the work of the COPP parties is known to only a small band of military historians and the dwindling number of veterans.

That is why a two-metre-high 12-ton granite monument now stands on Hayling, unveiled by Lord Mountbatten's daughter.

Countess Mountbatten of Burma said: "I think it's wonderful that the Chief of the Defence Staff has attended – it shows what is thought of what happened when the COPPists were operating."

It took Hayling historian Robin Walton three years of campaigning and fundraising to install the 12-ton memorial on the seafloor.

He said: "There are hundreds of memorials to commando raids in France but very few in Britain.

"We remember the Cockleshell Heroes for their raid – quite rightly – but this was strategically even more important.

"These brave men were literally leading the way to D-Day with their surveillance work."

Major General Ed Davis, Commandant General RM, paid tribute to the work of COPP units and explained their importance as ancestors of the SBS.

"It was a very memorable occasion allowing us to look back on the accomplishments and achievements of some very brave men," he said.

For details on the monument, the men and their missions, go to www.coppheroes.org

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● Two American riverine boats leave their mother ship, RFA Cardigan Bay, behind to head out on patrol



● HMS Shoreham leads the way as she falls into line astern of Cardigan Bay, ahead of USS Dextrous, Sentry and Devastator

Pictures: PO(Phot) Simmo Simpson, FRPU East, and PO(MTO) Chris Weissenborn, RNZN

Mined games

FOUR British warships and more than 400 sailors and Royal Marines played a key role in one of the biggest minehunting exercises ever staged in the Middle East.

IMCMEX12 – International Mine Counter-Measures Exercise 2012 – was designed to test the abilities of 30 nations to work together and deal with the threat of mines blocking some of the most important sea lanes in the world.

Minehunters HMS Shoreham and Atherstone, their support ship RFA Cardigan Bay, all based in Bahrain, plus new destroyer HMS Diamond, and the mine warfare battle staff, comprised the UK's input to the exercise which saw around 3,000 sailors from over two dozen nations, including the USA, Japan, New Zealand, Yemen, France, Italy, Jordan, Australia, Canada, and Norway, work together across around 1,000 miles of ocean.

Given the scale of the 11-day exercise and the many nations (and languages) involved, organisers laid on a mini-Olympiad to allow the different nationalities to get to know each other.

Despite having the smallest ship's company (around 45) in the tournament, Atherstone walked away with the inaugural IMCMEX trophy having proved overall masters of swimming, football, volleyball and basketball.

While sailors were demonstrating their sporting prowess, senior officers were locked in three days of discussions about the latest technology in mines, including the threats posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (or homemade mines), and the latest technology and techniques in dealing with such threats.

After that, the exercise shifted to sea.

Part of the force was escorted on its way by Portsmouth-based destroyer HMS Diamond.

"The scale of this mine counter-measure exercise shows the wide-scale commitment of nations to supporting maritime security and

keeping the vital sea lanes open for trade," said Diamond's Commanding Officer Cdr Ian Clarke.

How vital?

Very.

Each day 17 million barrels of oil pass through the narrows between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula, while 3-4 million barrels are moved through the Bab-al-Mandeb Strait, gateway to the Red Sea.

In a typical week, more than 500 ships pass through Hormuz – three in every five of them energy carriers (including liquefied natural gas which is used in the UK) – and those departing the Gulf must use a two-mile-wide outbound traffic lane to reach the open waters of the Arabian Sea and beyond.

In view of the importance of these choke points, IMCMEX was divided into three areas: one off Bahrain, another in the Gulf of Oman, and the third near the Bab-al-Mandeb.

Diamond 'dipped in and out' of the exercise, letting the mine warfare experts knuckle down to a mix of task group manoeuvres, mine-hunting operations, helicopter mine counter-measures missions (courtesy of the Americans), and international dive teams working together.

The latter was particularly evident aboard HMS Shoreham, which hosted divers from New Zealand and the USA; they not only practised the art of mine disposal but also the worst-case scenario: a diving casualty.

Shoreham has a two-man recompression chamber capable of recreating depths of up to 80m (262ft) for divers suffering 'the bends' – decompression sickness.

Using sea boats, the British, American and Kiwi divers demonstrated the swift reactions needed to get a stricken diver back to the ship before they carried out the main part of the exercise.

"In any diving emergency swift reactions are essential to get the injured diver into a recompression chamber, regardless of which

nation they are from," said Shoreham's AB(D) Craig Hay.

"It's again proven our ability to work with other navies to quickly provide assistance to a casualty if required."

Senior Chief Sean Smith from the US Navy's Explosive Ordnance Disposal team added: "It is great to be diving with our international partners – it's confidence-building to become familiar with their equipment too."

The New Zealanders brought a specialist team with robot submarines (officially: underwater unmanned vehicles, or UUVs) to the exercise to demonstrate how much time they could save dive teams hunting for mines.

"They really can save the divers a lot of effort, especially in the search phases, and focus their activity to where it is really needed," explained Chief Combat System Specialist Quinn Harris RNZN.

"This helps the team to be more efficient in executing their task. The ships, UUVs and dive teams present force commanders with a fantastic combined capability."

Having previously worked in Royal Navy diving teams during a six-month exchange programme, Chief Diver Rangi Ehu RNZN enjoyed the opportunity to again work with other teams.

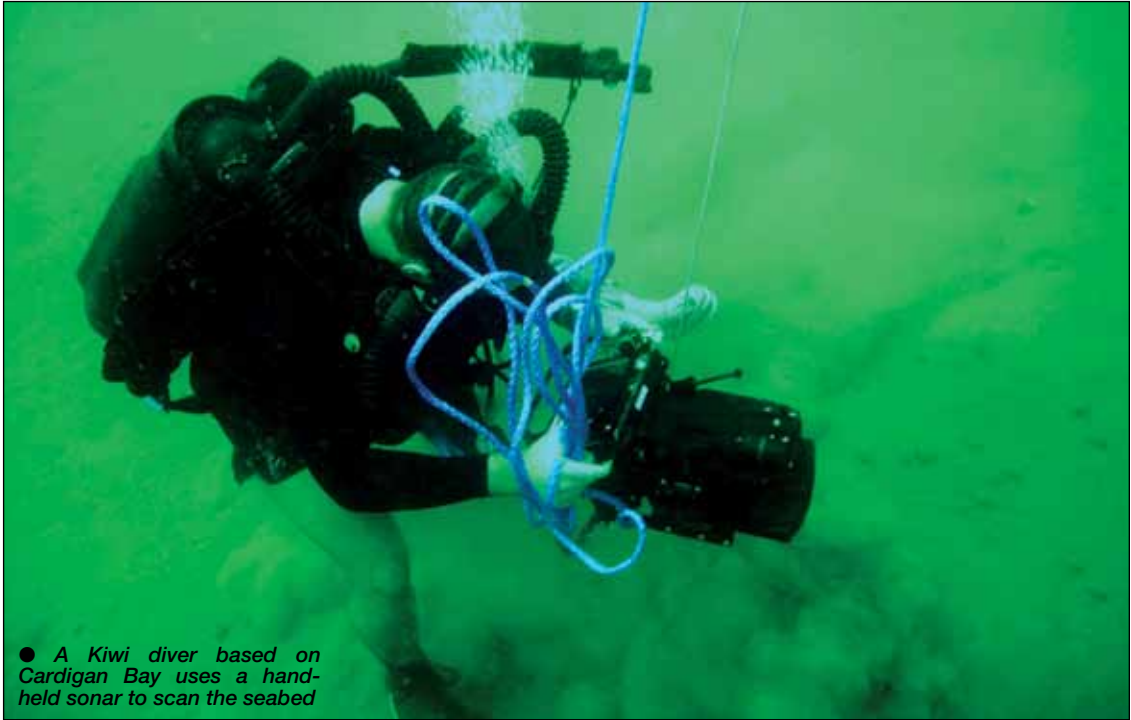
"Being part of a small team, it is good to find that you are operating on a par with the larger entities," he said.

"Shoreham's team looked after us well and the assured, professional nature of these three teams shows the benefit of good equipment and training together."

His words were echoed by Vice Admiral John Miller, the Commander of US Naval Forces Central Command – in charge of the US Navy's operations in the Middle East: "I couldn't be happier with how the international forces came together to make this exercise a valuable experience for all."



● HMS Shoreham and Cardigan Bay are silhouetted against the Gulf sun as the minehunter recovers a Kiwi dive team



● A Kiwi diver based on Cardigan Bay uses a hand-held sonar to scan the seabed



● A US senior rating stands guard on a riverine patrol boat with the unmistakable shape of HMS Diamond in the background

At sea with HMS Mersey



Writer John Periam from weekly magazine *Fishing News* was invited to spend some time at sea in River-class fishery protection ship HMS Mersey, finding out about the men and women who serve on board these perennially busy protectors of our coast.

UNDER the Command of Lt Cdr Sarah Oakley, fishery patrol ship HMS Mersey has a crew of 45 including those that man the two Halmatic Jet Pacific 22 rigid inflatable boats. Lt Cdr Oakley joined the Royal Navy in 1995 after reading a degree in Modern History at Trinity College, Oxford.

On completion of her initial training at Britannia Royal Naval College she continued her training at sea in HMS Beaver, Sheffield and Orwell.

For her first complement appointment, Lt Cdr Oakley joined HMS Alderney as the Gunnery Officer and British Seas Fisheries Officer.

Further appointments followed as Officer of the Watch 1 and Signal Communications Officer in HMS Kent, bringing the 'Millennium Frigate' from build through a successful trial programme and Operational Sea Training ready for her first deployment to the Gulf.

"Our task is to inspect fishing vessels operating up to 200 miles off the UK's coastline," said Lt Cdr Oakley.

"We are there to enforce UK and EU regulations designed to preserve fish stocks for future generations. The Royal Navy operates on behalf of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO)."

The idea of today's visit and trip to sea was to see first-hand just how the crew operate and inspect fishing boats.

MMO Principal Marine Officer for the South East, Paul Johnson, said: "Wherever possible we work to achieve compliance through education, advice and guidance only using appropriate and proportionate enforcement action as a last result."

"We carry out thousands of inspections every year and only a very small number result in the need for prosecution."

In 2011, the MMO:

- Carried out 2,862 vessel inspections
- Offered formal advice on 386 separate occasions
- Issued 83 written warnings
- Commenced 22 prosecution cases
- Levied seven financial administrative penalties

Paul Johnson added: "The Royal Navy has a range of information on vessels, and looks at all of this before deciding to board."

"It's really important to treat each fishing vessel fairly, so



boardings are regulated to make sure they are consistent."

"The coxswains on the RIBs are some of the most experienced in the Royal Navy," said Lt George Quilter, Mersey's Gunnery Officer.

"We have a number of boarding officers on board when we are at sea and work a rotation list linked to our other work on the bridge of the vessel."

"On the nominated day as boarding officer, once a fishing vessel has been selected we have a brief on it from the Commanding Officer prior to getting clearance to board."

"These ships have a wealth of experience with their crews operating sea boats. The bridge team are very knowledgeable when it comes to getting the boats in and out of the water at all times and often in confusing seas."

"That said, it can at times get pretty hairy, and safety is top of the list."

"Leaving and returning to Mersey may look complex but that is the easier part."

"Boarding a fishing boat is where risk is involved and I have been in a situation where it has been a bit rough and the fishing vessel is moving a lot and I have been left hanging on the ladder up to my waist in water. We do what we can to mitigate that."

He added: "My first concern is to get myself and my assistant boarding officer on board then the RIB away."

Once on board they can be there for over two hours or longer if issues do arise.

I asked how they approach most situations. "Initial contact is made with the ship's master we then

discuss what the requirements will be whilst there."

"We need to know what the vessel is doing and are they planning to haul shortly, working out to conduct the inspection."

"Our aim is not to disrupt the working of the vessel. We are aware that we are entering another person's world."

"We want to be seen as friendly yet professional and we have a mutual respect for each other."

"The boarding is not about looking for a prosecution – the aim is to encourage compliance. Working with Mersey one sees a really professional team and they are great to work with. When you are a foreign vessel and you see 'a big great ship' in the distance it concentrates the mind," said Paul Johnson with a smile.

Being a commander of a Royal Navy ship is in its own right a challenge but Lt Cdr Oakley is popular with her crew and has an excellent working relationship with all involved.

One has to admire her knowledge of the fisheries industry and she has performed most tasks the crew do herself during her own career to date.

"I have two main lines of communication, one to the MMO and the other to the Royal Navy."

"I am in touch with Newcastle when it involves fishery-related issues and anything to do with the running of HMS Mersey such as a mechanical or crew problem I deal with the Navy."

I asked her about the crew and how they manage to work so many days at sea during a year.

"These ships are a civilian design and as such they are very efficient and very modern with a

320-day at sea capability.

"We have two maintenance periods a year; one of nine days and the other of 14 days."

Common sense tells one that one crew cannot man Mersey all the time so they have worked out a watch system.

"We have three crews – red, white and blue watch – and at any one time I will have two of those crews aboard."

"We are at sea for 12 days then we will have a two-day operational stand off where we change crews. As a result in every six-week period crews will spend about four weeks on board."

Her second-in-command Lt Cdr Rob Lamb will take command when she has her stint ashore. This is ideal for a junior officer to get more experience which is what the Royal Navy encourages.

"I still retain responsibility for the ship when on leave so should any issues arise I can be contacted," said Lt Cdr Oakley.

Based in Portsmouth, HMS Mersey spends more time at other ports linked to her duties at sea than her home base.

"It is nice for people to see us and we often get involved in promoting the Navy which at times can involve some VIP visits."

"We also encourage the Sea Cadets to visit us; after all they are our future," added Lt Cdr Oakley with a smile.

As writer of this feature: "It is a visit I will remember and a big thank you HMS Mersey's Lt Cdr Sarah Oakley and her crew."

"It gave me an insight as to how fishery protection works from a different level. I was impressed with their knowledge of how the industry works and their values in understanding

the fishermen and their current concerns.

"They are there to protect the fishermen and there are regulations that have to be adhered to. Seeing the way they work with the MMO I have now begun to understand more of just what is involved plus of course what is needed; to make the fishing industry succeed once again."

"Fishermen have their views but they also deep down understand the problems. HMS Mersey is working hard to look after their interests and that was clear to see on this visit."

■ Words and Images John Periam (thanks also to Geoffrey Lee, Planefocus Ltd)



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Pictures: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson, HMS Dauntless



Something old, son

ET CETERA, et cetera as the saying goes...

There are few more magnificent sights to make the bristles on the back of a sailor's neck rise: one of the greatest warships in the world in one of the great harbours of the world.

And next to HMS Dauntless in Boston harbour, there's also the USS Constitution...

The very last port of call for the new destroyer on her maiden deployment after a 30,000-mile odyssey around the North and South Atlantic 'rim' was the birthplace of the American Revolution.

The Portsmouth-based Type 45 enjoyed a berth in historic Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston, just a few feet from the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat; HMS Victory is older, bigger, and more powerful but she sits on a concrete plinth and doesn't put to sea, whereas Constitution does occasionally – most recently this summer.

That was to celebrate the ship's role in the War of 1812 when the heavy frigate earned the nickname Old Ironsides after a brief but ferocious clash with HMS Guerriere off the coast of Canada which saw the British ship first captured, then burned.

All of which is a long time in the past... Anglo-American relations are rather warmer in 2012...

"In the course of her travels Dauntless has worked closely with numerous ships in the US Navy – though none has been as impressive as the USS Constitution, nor could boast of victories over the British as one of their battle honours," said Lt Tom Rowley, Dauntless' air warfare officer, who was inspired by the sight of Old Ironsides.

The Type 45 is due home in Portsmouth at the end of this month, thus bringing the curtain down on her seven-month Auriga 12 deployment which has focused on working with foreign navies and international agencies in the fight against crime at sea.

In doing so Dauntless has worked with around 70 different maritime agencies – navies, coastguards or other organisations – from a staggering 27 different countries across four continents.

The UK-US 'special relationship' has featured strongly from counter-piracy work off the west coast of Africa in the early stages of the deployment to a major exercise in the Caribbean last month (more on that in a mo), then a short spell on drug-busting patrol in the same region with a US Coast Guard Law Enforcement

Detachment embarked (that would be 'something borrowed'), before heading to New England.

"It is actually very fitting for us to round off the end of what has been a very successful deployment with a port visit here in Boston, the birthplace of the US Navy," said Dauntless' CO Capt Will Warrender.

"Our special relationship with the USA is very much alive and well and the ability of the US Navy and Royal Navy to operate together is something at which we both work very hard, and as a result we have a huge mutual respect for each other at sea."

Capt Warrender continued: "Working together with other navies is an essential part of modern naval policy and has been at the core of everything that we have done during this deployment."

"Berthed next to USS Constitution, the most famous ship in the US Navy, we see as a tremendous honour and one which I hope helps to continue our close bonds of friendship and professional respect."

NOW about that major exercise in the Caribbean...

UNITAS was billed as the largest

and longest-running such war game in the Northern Hemisphere (no we'd not heard of it either...).

Thirteen warships from seven nations – Brazil (who provided former HMS Broadsword, now BNS Greenhalgh), Canada, Colombia, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, plus hosts the USA and Dauntless flying the flag for Blighty – converged on Key West in Florida for an 11-day workout, by far the most impressive segment of which was a spectacular night gunnery shoot.

Chaff and tracer streaked across the Gulf of Mexico as not just the new Type 45 but other warships let rip (technical term) with their guns.

Star shells from cruiser USS Anzio lit up the Caribbean sky and the various ships taking part let loose with their guns – in Dauntless' case her Minigun (a Gatling gun in the hands of a sailor) and General Purpose Machine-Guns as well as infra-red decoy rounds (designed to fool heat-seeking missiles) fired from Mk240 launchers.

D33 expended thousands of rounds (not too hard in the case of the Minigun which throws out



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● 'Our own personal Olympic firework closing ceremony...' A spectacular burst of sparks and tracer from a Minigun



● A fiery blast from the chaff launcher as a decoy hurtles into the night...



Something new...

a hail of steel at a rate of up to 6,000 rounds a minute) during the spectacular shoot.

"It was our own personal Olympic firework closing ceremony – we missed the real thing. Every ship in the task group was involved and it was really quite something to see," said Lt Rowley.

For the Brits UNITAS was a welcome change having spent most of the deployment acting as a 'lone wolf' all alone in the North and South Atlantic.

"To get back in with some big boys was of benefit and helped to lift our operational capability," said Lt Rowley. "Operating as a task group, the bridge has been the most busy: the officer of the watch dealt with complex formations – and in pidgin English/Spanish."

One of those under-pressure officers of the watch was Sub Lt James 'Hodge' Hodgkiss. "Personally, I learned a lot. I found it taxing at times, but it was great to see how all our training comes together.

"As a bridge team, we really enjoyed UNITAS – it was possibly the highlight of our deployment so far."

As well as complex task group

manoeuvres, the force had to fend off drone attacks by air and sea; the former was shot down by the Anzio, rather than Dauntless' Sea Viper missiles; the waterborne drones – Hammerhead remote-controlled fast attack boats – were collectively dispatched.

And when things quietened down a bit, Dauntless' Lynx went up while 91 members of the ship's company mustered on the flight deck for a 'photex' – photographic exercise.

There's not enough space (or sailors for that matter) to spell out her name, but T45 will do very nicely, thank you.

It took some clever marshalling of the ship's company, some skilful flying from the aircrew, and a head for heights from LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson hanging out of the side capturing the moment on camera.

Before Dauntless and the other vessels headed out into the Gulf of Mexico for the active phase of UNITAS, various activities were laid on for their sailors – some competitive, some community-driven.

Teams representing Britain, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and the US Navy and Coast Guard went head-to-head in basketball, running, 'soccer', tug-

of-war, volleyball, and, er, cookery.

The Brazilian Navy took the honours in running and volleyball, the crew of USS Anzio triumphed in basketball and tug-of-war, while Dauntless proved the best in 'soccer' (yes, that surprised us too...) and cookery, where chefs were invited to prepare signature dishes from their homelands.

"We were all grinning from ear to ear," said LS(EW) 'Ned' Kelly. "How often can you say you beat Mexico in a football competition? "The heat made it really difficult though."

As for the chefs, they produced a 'sublime' beef Wellington with roast veg and all the trimmings, served to judges with a perfect bottle of claret on the ship's finest china with silver service.

"With a name like mine, we had to deliver, didn't we?" said LCH 'Battler' Britten.

"As chefs, we're used to working in the heat, but doing it outside and seeing what the other ships produced was great – and was made all the better when we won."

As for the 'something blue' aluded to in the headline. Number 4s working rig, perhaps. Or the Atlantic...



● ... explodes and drifts towards the surface of the Caribbean



SPIFFING LINE-UP

ALL HANDS ON FO'C'SLE

HISTORIC IMAGE RECREATED

THE more things change, the more they stay the same...

Above is the ship's company of HMS Dauntless, pride of the Royal Navy in 2012, posing on the forecandle as their vessel sails through American waters

And below is the ship's company of HMS Dauntless posing on the forecandle as their vessel sails through American waters exactly 91 years ago...

Crew from today's Dauntless recreated the historic image during the UNITAS exercise.

The ship's photographer LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson choreographed proceedings, organising 174 of the 200 sailors and Royal Marines aboard into position for the snap (the rest of the ship's company were on duty) – making full use of the sweeping forecandle and lining up crew in front of the main 4.5in gun, on top of the Sea Viper missile silo and in front of the bridge...

Just as her predecessor did 91

years ago on September 19 1921 in New York harbour, with the destroyer USS Ericsson in the background – although the circumstances surrounding the light cruiser's visit to the Big Apple were rather sombre.

Dauntless sailed across the Atlantic to repatriate the dead of the airship R38 which was designed for the Royal Navy, but sold to the Americans when Britain decided it no longer needed the leviathan with the end of World War 1.

The airship was the largest in the world – nearly 700ft long – with a crew of 49 and was intended to carry out six-day-long patrols scouting for enemy submarines and, if necessary, attacking them with bombs and machine-guns.

But on only its fourth test flight, the R38 suffered structural failure over Hull, exploded in mid-air, shattering windows in the city's homes, and plunged into the River Humber. Sixteen of the 17 American crew and 28 of the 32 Britons aboard the airship were killed.

The historic image today hangs in the wardroom of the present Dauntless – the first warship to bear the name since her predecessor was scrapped in 1946.



RN to share Olympic skills with Brazil

THE Royal Navy will share its experiences protecting this year's Olympics to make the next games in 2016 in Rio safe and secure.

That is one outcome of an agreement signed by the heads of the British and Brazilian Navies in the host city for the next Olympiad.

More than 2,600 sailors, Royal Marines and Fleet Air Arm air and ground crew supported the Olympic security mission – carrying out patrols by sea and air over London and Weymouth, as well as providing venue security on the ground throughout the two-month sporting spectacular.

The Memorandum of Understanding – signed in the presence of premier David Cameron on his flying visit to Brazil – also means the two naval forces will share technological information and co-operate in the field of marine systems.

"The memorandum points out that there is an opportunity to work together, so that we can share the lessons that the Navy learned at the Olympics, in London, and, professionally, allow companies to work together and share common practices to develop common skills, here in Brazil and in the United Kingdom," said First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

His Brazilian counterpart Admiral Julio Soares de Moura Neto added: "The areas of co-operation are wide and involve technology transfer, knowledge of construction of various types of ships, such as patrol vessels, frigates and aircraft carriers."

The memorandum follows an agreement Admiral Stanhope signed with Brazil's naval attaché to the UK back in 2010 and, most recently, HMS Dauntless exercising with Brazil's BNS Greenhalgh – formerly HMS Broadsword – only last month in the Caribbean (see left).

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Dame Mary prepares for RNR role

OLYMPIC gold medallist Dame Mary Peters has been given a taste of life in the Senior Service in preparation for her new role as an Honorary Captain in the RNR.

Dame Mary was one of four newly-appointed RNR and RMR Honorary Officers who visited Dartmouth as part of their induction into the Service.

As well as being briefed on the history and ethos of the Royal Navy, the visitors were shown the facilities used to train the current generation of Officer Cadets.

The other Honorary Officers were yachtswoman Cdr Dee Caffari, Col Mark Hatt-Cook, Honorary Colonel RMR City of London, and Cdr Chris Wells, Master RMS Queen Mary 2.

Dame Mary, who struck gold for GB in the pentathlon at the 1972 Munich Olympics, said: "I'm absolutely thrilled and honoured to be appointed to the RNR."

"Coming to the College and seeing all the history from Nelson onwards makes it all amazing."

"I've no history of the Royal Navy in my family, but I'll be proud to wear the uniform and carry out my duties."

Cdre Gareth Derrick, Commander Maritime Reserves, said: "Honorary Officers are a notable array of people from a broad spectrum of society, including industry, sport and charitable organisations."

"Their role is to represent the Royal Navy and the Maritime Reserves through their day-to-day lives, and this introductory course is designed to prepare them to undertake their duties, with a good insight into the Service."

There are some 25 Honorary Royal Navy Reservist officers.

Cdre Derrick said: "The Honorary Officers are very important to the Maritime Reservists expansion programme."

"Along with their other duties these people will be asked to use some of their time to engage with employers and academia to seek the talent that is essential for our growth, and to ensure that the mutual benefit of Reserve service are understood."



Divisions at Hibernia

HMS HIBERNIA, the RNR unit in Northern Ireland, welcomed the new Commodore Maritime Reserves, Cdre Gareth Derrick, to a combined ceremonial divisions.

A bugler from the Royal Marines Band Scotland was loaned to the unit (above) as Hibernia staff were joined by Sea Cadets from Lisburn and CCF personnel from bangor College and Campbell College at an event which included ceremonial sunset.

Cdre Derrick took the salute, and presented medals to the CO of HMS Hibernia, Cdr Ian Allen RNR (the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal) and LLogs Paul Barrett (the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal).

More than 100 ship's company and cadets took part in the Divisions, which was attended by a number of guests including Brig Rob Thompson, Commander 38 (Irish) Brigade, and Honorary Capt RNR Lady Carswell.

Royal visitor for Air Branch

THE RNR Air Branch welcomed a royal aviator to RN Air Station Yeovilton to show the branch's role in the wider Naval Service.

Prince Michael of Kent, travelling to HMS Heron in his capacity as Honorary Rear Admiral Maritime Reserves, saw how the reservists – all of whom have completed a full career in the Royal Navy – continue to be involved in all aspects of naval flying operations both in the UK and abroad.

Many are veterans of recent operations in the Middle East, and further back, the Adriatic, Northern Ireland and the Falklands.

Prince Michael was met by Cdr Justin Wood RNR, Head of

the Air Branch, who briefed him on branch changes since his last visit in 2004, and on plans for the branch to develop within the overall expansion of the RNR.

Cdr Wood said: "We were delighted that Prince Michael should visit us again to see the Reserve effect over all areas of the Fleet Air Arm, and in particular in Commando Helicopter operations."

"The Air Branch is proud of its ethos of 'Experience in Reserve' and was able to show how that experience is a highly cost-effective multiplier of the Fleet Air Arm's capability."

Calling in to the Commando Helicopter Force Prince Michael was introduced to Reservists who

are embedded with the Regulars on a daily basis to support areas including flying training.

He also flew a sortie in a Sea King 4 of 848 Squadron – the Prince is a qualified military pilot and had a chance to act as 'P2' in an aircraft crewed by two reservists, Lt Cdr Ric Fox and CPOACMN Andy Vanes, both of whom are current part-time flying instructors on the squadron.

As well as operating at Yeovilton, where 220 Reservists are based, the branch also has another 100 people, mostly at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

● Prince Michael of Kent in the left-hand seat of a Sea King Mk4 of 848 Naval Air Squadron at Yeovilton



Vivid visit builds a bridge

TWENTY members of HMS Vivid, Plymouth's Reserve Training Centre, have spent a weekend undertaking a series of training activities with the Jersey Field Squadron (JFS), the Channel Island's Territorial Army unit.

The training was based at LeQuesne Barracks in St Helier, Jersey.

The weekend was organised to conduct inter-unit and inter-Service training to provide a broadening experience for both units, aimed at showing personnel of each Service how the other works.

The weekend was a great success, with a good mix of challenging physical tasks and general military training.

These provided an opportunity for the JFS Junior ranks to practice their instructional and briefing skills and for the Royal Naval Reservists to get to grips with equipment and scenarios they would not encounter during normal naval training.

The weekend included constructing a medium girder bridge and a demonstration of the techniques used by the Army to counter the threat of roadside bombs.

A series of stances demonstrated the sorts of evolutions and situations the Royal Engineers may be called upon to deal with.

These included a vehicle stuck fast in a ravine; a multi-casualty scenario resulting from a landmine explosion and building a floating platform to move a sensitive piece of equipment.

The visit included a trip to the Channel Islands Occupation Society, where Martyn Garnier showed the RNR team round Noirmont Point, a stunning example of Jersey's seaward defences built during the German occupation in World War 2.

Lt Cdr Simon Turner, of HMS Vivid, said: "The weekend was a great success."

"The mixing of personnel from different areas of the UK's Reserve Forces has a very positive impact and brings many benefits, not least in the promotion of mutual understanding and cooperation."

It is planned to stage a return visit next year, when HMS Vivid will invite the JFS to Plymouth to experience some of the training evolutions which Naval personnel undergo.

New chief signs in

THE Maritime Reserves have a new man in charge.

Cdre Gareth Derrick, who joined the Royal Navy in 1977 and who initially worked in the Submarine Service, has succeeded Cdre John Keegan as Commander Maritime Reserves (CMR).

He will be based at the CMR headquarters in Portsmouth.

CMR provides a single, efficient command structure for more than 3,000 personnel across the country.

One of Cdre Derrick's first tasks in post is to implement Future Reserves 2020, a Government-led initiative designed to build the Reserve forces of all three Services, with the Maritime Reserve benefiting from a £96m investment.

Cdre Derrick said: "I am immensely proud to have taken command of the Maritime Reserves in 2012."

"The past two years has been tremendously satisfying professionally, as well as humbling."

"Our people have served on operations at sea, in the air and on land making an excellent contribution to operational success."

"But our achievements are inevitably touched by the sacrifices that are sometimes necessary by our people and the families that stand behind them."

"As we move forward with the Future Reserves programme, increasing numbers of Maritime Reservists, both Naval and Marines

will work directly alongside our Regular counterparts."

"We make a great team."

Gareth, who is married with three children and one granddaughter, lists sailing, motorcycling, cheese-making and country sports amongst his hobbies.

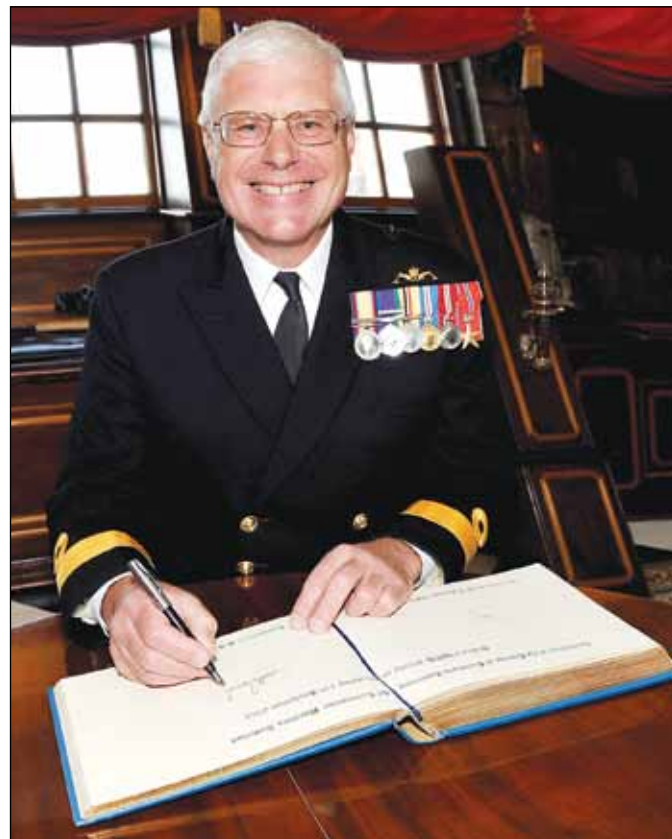
His career has had a distinct international dimension.

He was appointed to British Forces (Middle East) HQ during the 1991 Gulf War, serving in Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait City following its liberation. Later that year he was attached to 3 Cdo Bde RM in Northern Iraq.

He was responsible for Fleet Acceptance of the tactical weapon systems of HM Submarines Vanguard and Victorious and in 1998-2000 was loaned to the Bangladesh Armed Forces to promote accountability to elected government.

He completed a MPhil in International Relations at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, and in 2003 returned to Iraq for a one-year tour as an Acting Captain, during which time he was attached to the US 352nd Civil Affairs Command, directing civil-military operations by US Army Reservists across theatre, and advising the embryonic Iraq National Security Council, winning the US Bronze Star.

He studied the Japanese language in preparation for a tour as Defence Attaché in Tokyo from 2007-2010, after which he was appointed Deputy CMR.



● Cdre Gareth Derrick signs the book marking the change of command ceremony in the Great Cabin of HMS Victory in Portsmouth

Picture: LA(Phot) Claire Myers

Divers join military security operation

THIS summer's Olympic and Paralympic Games gave Reservist divers the chance to work alongside their regular colleagues.

London's RNR unit HMS President was the hub of the RN's security operation on the Thames.

With its riverside location by Tower Bridge, and rapid access via road or water to all key venues, President proved an ideal base for the two diving teams available for tasking at short notice.

Within these teams were five members of the RNR's Diving Branch who, along with 350 other Maritime Reservists, put their civic jobs on hold to mobilise for Operation Olympics.

Working alongside the Navy's Southern Diving Group were Lts Adam Bolton and Nick Foster, and ABs Tony Cassidy, Rob Powell and Jim Travers, providing niche underwater explosive ordnance disposal support to assist the Metropolitan Police.

This proved an ideal opportunity for the reservists to integrate fully with regular divers over a sustained period, putting years of training to the test.

Lt Bolton, of HMS Vivid in Plymouth, found his mobilisation a rewarding experience:

"This deployment offered me the opportunity to see first-hand how the RN diving branch

conducts itself in an operational environment," said Adam, an offshore surveyor.

"It has been immensely useful as a test of our branch's training programme, and we will be able to use the experience to tailor the future direction of the RNR branch."

Lt Nick Foster, from Durham, echoed Adam's comments:

"Being deployed for Op Olympics has given me the chance to put into practice all the skills I've gained over the past five years within the RNR diving branch."

"It has also allowed me to see how the RN diving team conducts itself over a sustained period of time, which will help us support the fleet better in future deployments."

Royal Mail manager Nick, of HMS Calliope in Gateshead, added that they were also able to experience the unique atmosphere of the capital during the Games.

The RNR divers were involved in underwater searches of key strategic locations ahead of the Olympic Torch flotilla and, throughout the Games, the Royal Docks and Canary Wharf.

In addition to their security role, their skills were regularly put to the test with a variety of tasks.

With HMS Ocean moored at Greenwich as a base for personnel



● AB Jim Travers and Lt Nick Foster prepare to dive under the pontoons of HMS President on the Thames during Op Olympics

and helicopters, the teams divided on the ship's freshwater pipe to ensure that it operated correctly.

They also undertook hull and propeller surveys for military vessels, and searched for lost equipment dropped in the river.

Nick Foster said: "Diving in the Thames is always challenging due to the tidal conditions, with currents reaching up to four knots and underwater visibility being nil, but it allowed the RNR divers to hone their skills in challenging

conditions."

AB Tony Cassidy, 27, from HMS Eaglet in Liverpool, is a support worker in civilian life.

"I've enjoyed the challenge and experience of working alongside the RN over the last few months," Tony said.

"Op Olympics has given the RNR divers the chance to show our regular colleagues how we can integrate into an active diving team and get the job done."

Carpenter AB Rob Powell, from

HMS Forward in Birmingham, also found being mobilised for the Games a rewarding experience.

"Diving with the RNR gives me the chance to do something completely different from my day job," he said.

And AB Jim Travers, a company director from Stirling and a member of HMS Scotia, in Rosyth, added: "Op Olympics has proved that a positive integration between the RNR and the RN is possible," he said.

"And for me personally, it's literally been a blast, especially as we had the excitement of carrying out controlled explosions during our pre-Games training."

Lt Cdr John Beavis CO of Southern Diving Group, said: "Having these reservists support our operation was absolutely key."

"The RNR divers provided the operation with critical resilience."

"Utterly professional, their swift and seamless integration into our team proved to be a tremendous asset and testament that this small, but fastidious, component of the RNR is a vital asset to UK-based diving and explosive ordnance disposal operations."

Diving is just one branch of the RNR. Candidates need to be physically fit, British, Irish or Commonwealth citizens, and aged between 16 and 40.

Payroll give today – get support for life

TOP TEN LEAGUE TABLE

SO who is leading the way when it comes to sign-ups for the RNRMC big competition? There is a chance to win one of five £1,000 cash prizes towards your unit's welfare fund.

All you have to do is sign up to the Payroll Giving scheme and gain the highest percentage increase in sign-ups to win. To date we have had 208 new sign ups, the competition is running from September 1 to January 2 2013.

The competition has now been running for 61 days with units jostling for position in the leader board, with a classic spurt from the PTIs at HMS Temeraire (must have a new PTI class going through!), closely followed by 1 Assault Group Royal Marines. HMS Dragon, one of last year's winners, is in the running to win again, currently holding sixth place.

This time round the leader board has not been dominated by submariners, although a late surge by HMS Artful has seen her push to third place – so to everyone else in the submariner community, why not get into the top ten and oust a Dragon? Well done to the divers – a true show of competitiveness. Let's hope the FAA can fly up the board.

Lastly a mention for 1AGRM – who has leapt up from bottom of the league table at the start of the competition to second place in just a few weeks – well done, RSM. HMS Gleaner is currently holding in at fifth place with 12 per cent. Can you be the team to push them out of the top five?

Please contact Dean Rogers on 93832 8417 for further details.

■ Look for RNTM 172/12 for further information.

HMS Artful	HMS Temeraire	1 Assault Group Royal Marines
3	1	2
4 HMS Raleigh 5 HMS Gleaner 6 HMS Dragon 7 Fleet Diving Squadron 8 HMS Duncan		9 Northern Diving Group 10 HMS Iron Duke

Are you in the top five?

If not, get involved with the payroll giving campaign.

WIN £1000

PAYROLL GIVING ARE YOU ABOARD?

visit www.rnrmc.org.uk



Another run for Sam and Laura

THE two Naval Nurses, LNN Samantha Marsh and Laura Fallon (pictured above), have notched up another half-marathon in their determined efforts to pull off a 'Baker's Dozen' of runs for the RNRMC.

With the Bristol half-marathon under their belts, the two are on the home straight – and really looking forward to finishing their herculean task for the year.



Thank you to the Band

A BIG thank you to the Band of the Royal Marines (Portsmouth) for organising a Big Band Extravaganza which raised over £2,000 for the RNRMC.

The concert, held at the King's Theatre Southsea, had the audience tapping their feet to classics from the swing era, and really showed off the band's versatility.

We also said a fond farewell to Director of Music Major Tony Smallwood Royal Marines, who retired from the band service after almost 30 years' service.

Tony has been a great supporter of the RNRMC and the CD that the band recorded specially for the charity, *Diamond Jubilee*, is still available to purchase on Amazon and from our online shop at www.rnrmc.org.uk/shop.

Victorian Festival supports the RNRMC

PORTSMOUTH Historic Dockyard has chosen the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity as the charity to be supported by their Victorian Festival of Christmas which takes place from Friday November 30 to Sunday December 2.

This popular event transforms the dockyard into a Victorian Winter Wonderland with hundreds of stalls selling gifts, arts, crafts and local food products, characters in Victorian costume, entertainers, steam engines, traditional funfair, a Fagin's Tavern, carol concerts and, of course, Father Christmas!

The ticket price includes access to HMS Victory, HMS Warrior 1860, and the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity will be joining in the fun and games with a stall selling charity gifts and luxury sailor teddy bears.

We will also be holding bucket collections at the events.

Do come and say hello!

If you are interested in volunteering to help us please contact Hilary Jukes on fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk or 023 9254 8155.

● Lt Cdr Steve Hayton from DMG(Navy), toy collector and expert David Barzilay, Dame Judi Dench and RNRMC Chief Executive Robert Robson



Good evening, Cdr Bond

GOOD evening, Commander Bond...

And it was a very good evening indeed for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity which received a £37,250 boost courtesy of an auction to mark 50 years of 007 on film.

The high-profile invitation-only event – attended by Bond legend Sir Roger Moore, the current 'M', Dame Judi Dench, and former Moneypenny, Samantha Bond – far exceeded expectations, raising nearly a million pounds for numerous good causes.

In the case of the RNRMC, a chauffeur-driven Aston Martin to the world premiere of the new Bond movie *Skyfall*, tickets to the after party and a night at the luxurious Claridge's hotel raised a staggering £37,250.

Bidding was fierce for the lot, which was just one of numerous unique items up for grab – a set of posters from *Thunderball* (£26K), Pierce Brosnan's Z8 from *The World is Not Enough* (£70K),

a *Moonraker* shuttle (£45K) among others – an event running as part of a worldwide 'James Bond Day'.

Eon Productions, behind the Bond film franchise, donated the *Skyfall* premiere bonanza, with Christie's donating their commission fees to the RNRMC.

"It was an immensely exciting evening and we are all hugely grateful to the generosity of the successful bidder who said that he just wanted to show his support for the men and women of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines," said RNRMC Chief Executive Robert Robson, who was watching proceedings from the back of the room as the bidding mounted.

"I know that the Royal Navy is proud to count Cdr Bond in their ranks and, in the (unlikely) event he ever falls foul of a difficult old age or illness, it will be one of our Naval charities that steps in to help."

As for *Skyfall*, it hits UK cinema screens on October 26.

Understanding giving through pay

How do I know if I am paying in to the RNRMC via payroll giving?

If I had £1 for every time I was asked that question the RNRMC would be a lot richer, so to help you understand those strange words you see on your pay statement, via the online version or hard copy, on the right is an example.

Help us to help you, and stop the confusion. Convert your old schemes to the new payroll giving scheme which now includes sports insurance. Payroll giving forms are available at www.rnrmc.org.uk.

Pay and Allowances	Value	Charges and Deductions	Value
Basic Pay	2896.09	PAYE	875.86
		NI D	212.12
		Service Charity Monthly (RN Charities)	5.00
		Paying into Payroll Giving	
		Service Charity Monthly (RN Charities)	4.33
		Paying the old SABS (Sports Amenities and Benevolence Scheme), renamed in 2010 to Payroll Giving	
		Service Charity Monthly (RN Charities)	1.00
		Paying into the Voluntary Sports Subscription Scheme	
		Service Days per giving (RN Charities)	(Varied amount)
		Paying into the older VDP (Voluntary Donations from Pay) scheme	

For further guidance contact Dean Rogers on 93832 8417, dean.rogers@rnrmc.org.uk.

SUPPORT US



Visit our online store for a range of clothing, gifts, accessories and other items which will help us to support you.

Polo shirt: £15
www.rnrmc.org.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS



BRITISH MILITARY TOURNAMENT

THE British Military Tournament is a unique event celebrating the best of our Armed Forces have to offer. Taking place at Earls Court, London, on December 8 and 9, the British Military Tournament will build on the phenomenal success of its last two years.

Ten per cent discount for serving personnel at: <http://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/promo/tb8c8h>

VICTORIAN FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS

PORTSMOUTH Historic Dockyard is celebrating the best of winters past and present again with the Victorian Festival of Christmas from Friday November 30 to Sunday December 2. Visit our stall to find ideas for festive gifts for the Naval family.

Find out more online at christmasfestival.co.uk.

CONTACT US

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Hampshire PO2 8ER
fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk

Join us on Facebook: search for 'Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity'

www.rnrmc.org.uk



● HMS Bulwark's rowers fundraise at Durham

Bulwark rows the Channel

INSPIRED by the deeds of the Olympians they've spent the summer helping to protect, five rowers from the nation's flagship headed to their affiliated city for a sporting challenge.

The team from assault ship HMS Bulwark – NA(AH)s Oliver Moger and Brent Richardson, AB Robert Blenkins, and Lts Tom Phillips and Kurt 'Aussie' Storey RNZN – travelled to Durham to take on local firefighters in a rowing challenge to raise money for Durham Trinity School.

Having just completed their duties supporting the Police during the Olympics and Paralympics and to the delight of onlookers the sailors took up position in the city's Market Square one Saturday in early September.

Sitting side by side against the firefighters on rowing machines, each team completed 34,000 metres – 34km or a little over 21 miles – the equivalent of crossing the English Channel.

Taking it in turns, they completed the challenge in just over two hours with the firemen slightly ahead.

Not wanting to stop there, the teams combined to complete the return leg together rowing a combined total of 102,000

metres or just short of 63 miles in one afternoon.

"It's been a great opportunity to raise money and build relations in the ship's affiliated town," said NA Moger. "We really enjoyed our stay and would love to be involved in the near future."

Throughout, teachers and children from Trinity School also took turns on spare machines to try to keep up with the Servicemen.

In glorious sunshine and with collecting buckets amongst the spectators, the school raised almost £500 for the benefit of pupils.

Durham Trinity's headteacher Julie Connolly said that her school's bond with HMS Bulwark was "an integral part of school life".

She added: "This visit to Durham was another example of the strong relationship."

"A team of fire fighters extended the community links further."

"The rowing event was enjoyed by all participants and onlookers and we look forward to it being an annual event."

HMS Bulwark then returned to her home port in Devonport for a short period ahead of her autumn deployment to the Mediterranean.

Culdrose cyclists complete ride across the US

A TEAM of cyclists from Culdrose completed their epic ride across the USA – but only two of the four riders made the finish line after a school bus knocked one of the bikers over... and his Royal Marine colleague gave chase.

Paramedic Wayne Davey was left with a broken arm and shoulder blade after being cut-up by the bus not 70 miles from his goal of iconic Times Square in New York – having pedalled all the way from California.

The 34-year-old, a South West Ambulance Service paramedic who flies with the lifesavers of 771 Naval Air Squadron based at Culdrose, is one of a four-strong team centred on the Cornish air station who vowed to ride 3,100 miles across the States in 17 days.

The quartet – Sea King aircrewman Cpl Justin Morgan and pilot Lt Ben Carthey, both of 771, John Williams, manager of the firefighters at St Mary's airport in the Scilly Isles, plus Wayne – averaged more than 180 miles in the saddle every day.

They were on the very last leg on the final day when the school bus first overtook Wayne, who was cycling with Justin at the time, and cut across him, leaving him no time to react.

"I was pretty close to going under the back wheels of the bus, so the injuries that I've sustained are pretty insignificant



to what could have happened," a surprisingly non-plussed Wayne said afterwards.

Justin made a quick assessment of Wayne's injuries, observed they were not life-threatening and he was conscious... and sped off after the yellow bus.

"I did catch him up about five miles down the road and pulled him over," Justin said. "He got a very angry Royal Marine explaining the situation and I took him – like a naughty school boy – back to the scene of the accident to the police."

That was the end not just of Wayne's ride, but also the Royal Marine's; he stayed with his colleague while he was

treated in hospital.

Ben and John continued on their way to Times Square and completed the 3,100-mile odyssey as planned.

They were subsequently joined in the Big Apple by their colleagues – on foot – for a spot of sightseeing, shopping and for Wayne, a pint of Guinness to ease the pain.

Although the cycling is complete, the fundraising goal of £20k – split evenly between the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund and Little Harbour Children's Hospice in St Austell – has still to be hit.

You can show your support via www.justgiving.com/3100miles



815 NAS Lynx delights at Wilton House

A LYNX from 815 Naval Air Squadron has been featured as part of the Wilton House Supercar day in Salisbury.

With the help of an enthusiastic team of volunteers from the squadron, this year's event raised over £34,000 for the Salisbury Little Stars Children's Appeal.

The event takes place each year in the grounds of Wilton House, and is a fantastic chance for visitors to see an impressive display of supercars and to raise money for children's charities.

This year over 100 of the world's most exotic and expensive cars were on show. Billed as the event 'brought to you by enthusiasts for enthusiasts', it regularly attracts over 15,000 spectators each year.

CPO Baz Firth from HMS Heron organised the Royal Navy presence after having attended the previous three years' events and building up friendships with the organisers and owners.

"The majority of work I do is for my chosen charity, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund, and I took the opportunity to pitch the banners around the Lynx with the donation bucket raising more money for the RNRMC."

The maritime attack helicopter was set up for the public to take a look at, chat with the aircrew and engineers, and even have a go at sitting in the cockpit – much to the delight of some (pictured above). Naval Air engineers handed out posters, answered questions from the public about their jobs, and had a great day with the visitors and guests.

Lord Pembroke, one of the organisers of the event, said: "The Lynx, those that manned the display area, and not forgetting the amazing display by the helicopter, were a highlight of the show."

"We have had such positive feedback from the press and the public about the Navy attending. Thank you."

100-mile gym challenge for RNRMC

LT PENNY Thackray, the Education Officer at Royal Marines Stonehouse in Plymouth, completed a gruelling challenge of 100 miles in the gym made up of a 3.8-mile row, a 26.2-mile run and a 70-mile cycle.

After all this, she passed a GCSE Maths exam in order to prove that she was still able to think when exhausted.

Lt Thackray was inspired to take this challenge after hearing the history of the Training Management Specialisation, beginning 300 years ago with robust individuals hired to instruct maths required for navigation.

She wanted to prove that this was still the case, under her education motto 'Fit to Fight, Think to Win'.

She was sponsored by Ronin Concepts, who specialise in security strategies and training.

The money raised was donated to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.



Panto returns to Deal – oh yes it does!

WHEN the government decided to close the Royal Marines barracks at Deal, Kent, little thought was given to the many close ties with the town that would be lost.

One of these events was the annual Sergeants Mess Pantomime, which was thought to have been lost forever.

However, a group of around 40 former Royal Marines living in the area have decided to resurrect the pantomime in order to raise money for Service charities.

The show, which is called *The Wizard Who's Odd* will run for a week on January 4-12 at the Astor Theatre in Deal.

Recent publicity events have seen the Corps de Ballet (bootnecks in ballet tutus, pictured

above) running a 10km race along the seafront, and buglers drumming their way through Deal as part of the carnival.

Both these activities have greatly raised the profile of the event, and the theatre is already getting bookings, so if you are thinking of coming along then book early to avoid disappointment.

Several committees are working hard to secure funding and sponsorship for each performance, ensuring that most of the estimated £8,000 to £10,000 raised will go straight to charity.

To request tickets please call the Astor Theatre in Deal on 01304 371 220 and for sponsorship information contact Brian Short on 01304 371 400.

DESPITE being in the full throes of preparing the ship for refit, three big-hearted sailors from HMS Ocean's Weapon Engineering Department put on a coffee morning in the ship's hangar as part of the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA) 'Big Brew Up'.

LET(WE) Janice Carmichael, ET(WE) Craig Murkin and ET(WE) Leighton Green dressed up to provide 180 cups of tea and 220 cakes to their fellow sailors, raising £250 for the charity in the process.

And in HMS Illustrious, soldiers, sailors and airmen enjoyed a well-earned 'wet' and cake of their choice when they brewed up to support SSAFA's Big Brew in the Junior Rates' dining hall.

The ship, which is currently taking part in Cougar, a three-month deployment to the Mediterranean, raised more than £300 for SSAFA.



● HMS Ocean's SSAFA Big Brew organisers: (l-r) LET(WE) Carmichael, ET(WE) Murkin, and ET(WE) Green

Remember the forgotten

MORE needs to be done to encourage young people to pursue maritime careers, say residents at the Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society, who fear that the industry has become a 'forgotten profession'.

A recent report by Maritime UK suggests that large numbers of seafarers will retire in the coming decade, leading to a shortage of personnel if more young people do not enter the industry.

In the late 1960s there were 104,000 people in the British Merchant Navy, and now the figure is just a quarter of that.

The Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society is a registered charity and was established in 1865 in order to provide accommodation, care and support to former seafarers who require special help and like-minded companionship in their old age.

Under the Royal Charter, 'seafarers' include Merchant Navy, Royal Navy, fishermen and port workers, as well as their widows or dependents.

One resident, Captain Roy Davis, who worked in the Merchant Navy for 45 years, said that the diminishing number of new recruits saddened him.

His longest voyage lasted 18 months and was his first trip as a midshipman. He worked his way up to second officer and left in 1956 to take a shore job.

One of Captain Davis' most interesting voyages involved transporting hundreds of sheep from Australia to Singapore, where he picked up 600 children to take back to Australia to attend school.

"The sheep were much better behaved passengers than the kids!" he recalls.

Cdr Brian Boxall-Hunt, Chief Executive of the society, says "We desperately need to raise awareness and counter the nation's 'sea blindness'. It remains a fact that 95 per cent of our goods arrive or depart this country by sea."

"Proper support and training for new recruits is essential since professional maritime skills underpin the UK's maritime business services and ports, and therefore the UK's prominence as a centre of maritime excellence."

"We at the Royal Alfred Seafarer's Society frequently engage with local schools to reiterate the importance of the Merchant Navy."

<http://www.royalalfredseafarers.com/>



Hughie runs a monster marathon

WO1(MA)SM Hughie Welsh ran the Loch Ness Marathon in support of Help for Heroes in a time of 4hr 16min 8sec, finishing in position 1,320 out of 4,000, raising more than £2,542 for the charity to date.

Normally Hughie is a Recovery Cell Divisional Officer at HMNB Clyde. However he is currently loaned for 12 months as Individual Augmentee at 104 Logistic Support Brigade based in Gloucestershire in preparation for his next deployment.

Problem was that Hughie had signed up for the impressively hilly Loch Ness Marathon before being posted to the comparatively flat countryside of Gloucestershire.

However, undaunted Hughie ploughed on, although he did admit that at 18 miles on the marathon route there was an extremely 'lumpy' part that he compared to an Exocet – "you know it's coming but cannot do anything about it."

As an RCDO, Hughie has had members of his division at Headley Court receiving rehabilitation. On a visit he was moved by the sheer courage and commitment of the patients he met – "All these people had their glasses half full as opposed to half empty."

Hughie himself has recently had a serious neck injury after slipping three discs and was only upgraded less than a year ago, so he is proud that he managed to achieve his aim of finishing his first marathon, and is planning on running his second marathon next year in Dublin.

It is not too late to sponsor him for the Loch Ness Marathon – please visit www.bmycharity.com/lochnessmarathonhw.

Amazing Graceland

INSPIRED by the film *3,000 miles to Graceland*, or perhaps the song *1,000 miles to Graceland* (either way it's a tenuous link) four brave cyclists set off from the Naval Outdoor Centre in Germany to ride to HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth – aka Graceland. (We told you it was a tenuous link....)

The ride took the team through Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, France and over the Channel by ferry to the UK, home, and Temeraire.

POPT Timothy Eckersley, who planned the venture, said: "As we got to Calais and had the ferry fixed firmly in our sights it was quite overwhelming to know that we had just ridden through mainland Europe."

"Our legs certainly felt the distance. Back in Britain, it was clear that we had broken the back of the ride, with only two days left. When we finally approached Portsmouth and headed towards HMS Temeraire the sad reality hit that it would soon be all over."

"As we rode our final 10k and turned into Burnaby Road we were greeted by many of the staff and the Commanding Officer of HMS Temeraire."

"After eight days in the saddle and covering over 1,000km we had achieved our goal. We had paid homage to the road in blood and had no sweat left to perspire."

The team was supported by the RN/RM Sports Lottery, Merida and Torq Fitness, and were raising money for the RNRMC.

Dragon's poppy boost

HMS Dragon helped launch the annual period of remembrance when she hosted poppy-carrying motorcyclists from Hampshire's Royal British Legion.

The Legion Riders called in on the Type 45 warship in Portsmouth Naval Base as part of a concerted effort to deliver collecting boxes and poppies to the shops and institutions around the harbour.

The RBL launched its annual appeal on October 24 to urge Britons to support warriors past and present by donating generously and wearing their poppies with pride throughout 'remembrance tide' – the period leading up to Remembrance Sunday, which this year falls on November 11, the 94th anniversary of the guns falling silent in the Great War.

Dragon is at sea undergoing front-line training off Plymouth to work the ship's company up for their maiden deployment in the New Year, so the bikers called in a few days before she departed her home base.

Former chief petty officers John Hardman – an ex-physical training instructor – and Dave Gibson –

who served as a communications information systems specialist – organised the visit to Dragon as they handed over tins and poppies as part of an effort to deliver 240 such collections around the Fareham area.

"The NAAFI canteen manager Dougie Reeks alerted us that we ought to stock up on poppies before we left harbour," explained Dragon's chaplain Father James Francis. "You know what they say: prior planning prevents..."

"Dougie couldn't quite believe his eyes when ten bikers roared up Sheer Jetty along with six female supporters and Legion staff."

Having richly supplied the destroyer with poppies, the legion riders were given a tour of Dragon by her CO Cdr Darren Houston and his ship's company.

"Dragon's proud to be doing her bit to support the Legion as it continues its invaluable work," said Cdr Houston, in support of the annual appeal.

"Buying a poppy year on year is an easy way of donating, but a powerful, symbolic act which demonstrates your solidarity with those who have lost their lives and those who survive injuries and get help from the Legion."

■ www.britishlegion.org.uk

Having a hoot at Ranvilles

AFTER HIS children kept urging him to visit their school, Leading Regulator Simon Shepherd turned up – along with some of his colleagues and a vehicle with a cage, siren, and flashing lights.

LR Shepherd, who works at HMS Collingwood, didn't have far to go, as his children attend Ranvilles School, in Fareham, which is located directly in the centre of the married quarters area.

During their visit to the Barn Owls after-school club, the reggies told the children about Stranger Danger and explained how they are different from the civilian police.

Dogged determination

GRAEME Maclean (pictured right), a Marine Engineer Officer based in Faslane, raised more than £600 for Canine Partners when he completed the 960-mile cycle ride from Land's End to John O'Groats.

Graeme, whose mother Barbara is a volunteer puppy parent for the charity, had always wanted to tackle the famous route, and when he joined HMS Vanguard earlier this year, he discovered his colleagues were already putting together a team.

The seven cyclists set off from Land's End after spending several months under the sea, so they found the first few days tough going and suffered from sunburn and saddle-sores.

However, they managed to average 65-90 miles each day, staying at youth hostels overnight, and completed the journey in 12 days.

Graeme, whose sister Zoe has cerebral palsy and has a canine partner called Remus, said: "The decision to raise money for Canine Partners was an easy one for me."

"The impact that Remus has had on Zoe's life is amazing. They have formed a close bond and he is tremendous at helping Zoe with the many tasks she finds difficult."

He added: "The ride was hard work at times, but the support team looked after us incredibly well and whenever I needed that extra bit of motivation I looked down on my Canine Partners' wristband, thought of Zoe and Remus, then wished I had learned



to ride a motorbike!"

Canine Partners is a registered charity that assists people with disabilities to enjoy a greater independence with the help of carefully matched dogs, who can

Lily's Sparkle Helpers keep memory alive

CHARLENE Jeffries, along with a group of nearly 40 family and friends, has taken on the Royal Marines Commando Challenge in order to raise money in the memory of her daughter Lily-Mae, who died in a traffic accident earlier this year.

The group (pictured right), named after a story Lily-Mae had written, completed the endurance challenge consisting of two 3km runs and a 4km assault course at Woodbury Common, Devon.

Charlene said: "This encompasses what Lily-Mae was all about – getting hands on and dirty, being with groups of people and having fun."

Thanks to the support of their sponsors, the family has raised £10,000 for the Royal Marine Charity C Group and the Devon Air Ambulance.

Lily's father, Sgt John Jeffries of Holding Troop, 40 Commando RM, thanked everyone for their support.

"We know we have a long road



ahead and a lifetime of loss to deal with, but with the support of friends and family and the 'big brother' which is the Royal Marines, our family will continue to drive forward with a beautiful memory of our daughter and

reassurance, that if needed, the Corps, as always, has our back."

Lily's Sparkle Helpers are still accepting sponsors.

To donate, please visit www.justgiving.com/lilys-sparkle-helpers

Taking on the Tough Mudders

AN INTREPID team representing all three Services based at Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton and Dartmouth intend to get down and dirty for charity in 'the toughest event on the planet'.

In mid-November a six-strong team – five from the Somerset air station, one from Britannia Royal Naval College – will run, crawl, slip, slide and climb their way around a fearsome 12-mile obstacle course in energy-sapping Cheshire mud.

The suitably-named 'Tough Mudder' – billed by organisers as 'the toughest event on the planet' – takes place at Cholmondeley Castle between Crewe and Chester, over a course designed by Special Forces troops to test a team's all-round strength, stamina, determination, and camaraderie.

Tough Mudder events have challenged half a million inspiring participants worldwide. Originating from across the Pond in America, the aim is to test the whole body to the limit – and foster team spirit.

The North West event involves extremes of freezing water, fire, 12ft-high walls, sinking mud, barbed wire, tunnels through and under water, finishing off with a minefield full of high-voltage electric wires.

Competitors can expect at least one of the 25 obstacles to be a surprise which won't be revealed until the start of the race.

None of which has put off the Yeovilton-based team of Cpl Tom Brownhill, Paul Davy and Lee Flynn of the Military Provost Guard Service and Sergeants

Mark West, a Royal Marine aircrewman, and David Brown RAF, serving with 848 Naval Air Squadron, with the sixth place filled by Cpl Ashley Wilkinson also from the MPGS and serving at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

"When I first heard about the Tough Mudder, I knew I had to do it and what better way to do it than with your mates. It's going to cause a lot of pain, but the charity side of things will make it worth it," said Paul.

The mudders hope to raise at least £500, shared between Flying Colours, which aims to improve equipment and facilities at Yeovil's Women's Hospital – in particular a new special care baby unit – and national charity Macmillan Cancer Research.

As part of their fund-raising, the team paid a visit to the hospital to see where some of the funds they hope to raise will go.

"This is going to be one of the hardest challenges of my life," Tom admitted. "Usually I'm quite accident-prone and I've broken bones and suffered concussion when playing rugby and football."

"It was no surprise when I heard the lads were taking bets on me finishing the course in one piece!"

You can support the lads via <http://www.justgiving.com/Paul-Davy0> and you can find out more about the event at <http://toughmudder.co.uk/events/north-west/>

CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL

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Remote, con



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Controlled explosions

AND it certainly doesn't get any more remote than this.

Not in Blighty.

The nearest supermarket is a three-hour drive, the nearest railway station two.

Which is why the military have bombed the bejesus out of Garvie Island, an indestructible granite monolith off the north-west tip of Scotland, for decades – and still do so.

Except that they don't always hit it.

And the bombs don't always detonate.

So each year a 15-strong team from the Northern Diving Group decamp from their base on the Clyde to the north coast of Sutherland.

The group – whose vast area of responsibility covers the shore and waters north of a line drawn from the Dee to the Humber, plus Northern Ireland – typically deal with the detritus of war: unexploded ordnance from Europe's two 20th-Century conflagrations washed up or unearthed after decades.

The stint in the Atlantic around Garvie Island offers a welcome change from the norm.

"For us it's the purest form of clearance diving there is," explains Lt Cdr Richard Osbaldestin, the diving group's Commanding Officer.

"You're diving, searching for live ordnance and blowing them up one after another."

This autumn's harvest was particularly rich: ten 500lb and 1,000lb live and practice bombs dispatched in the water, one more on the island itself.

Garvie – the coordinates are 58° 37'2"N, 4° 52' 20W if you're struggling to find it on a map – is around 750ft long, 250ft wide at the fattest section, and lies on a north-east/south-west axis around 350 yards off the Sutherland coast.

It was chosen for pummelling because

- it's a relatively safe distance from the shoreline – and human habitation;
- it's pretty much indestructible;
- it resembles an aircraft carrier "in the loosest possible sense".

The RAF and, in the good old days of naval fixed wing flight, the Fleet Air Arm, hammered the island repeatedly with 500 and 1,000lb bombs – some practice weapons, some live.

When the bombing runs are under way, spotters on the shore 350 or so yards to the south report the fall of the bombs, so the divers have a (very) rough idea of where the unexploded ordnance lies – if it doesn't hit the spot.

And given that the jets come screaming in at several hundred knots to attack a relatively narrow target, even if it is immobile, not a few bombs miss the island and plunge into the Atlantic.

Most of the bombs land in a trough between Garvie and a reef. Those that have been there 12 months are generally still in pristine condition – the lettering and markings, such as a green and yellow ring (live) or blue (an inert or practice bomb) are unmistakeable.

And then there are those which have been hidden by the dense 'forests' of fettuccine-like kelp, which billows in the strong current.

The divers can use REMUS, a small robot submarine equipped with sonar; it can be set on a pre-planned search pattern to scan the seabed, saving the divers hours...

...but the topography of the waters around the island mean REMUS' usefulness is limited.

Plan B. Fingers and the Mark 1 eyeball and feel through the kelp in conditions which aren't always favourable to the diver.

"If you get big seas, they're very big seas – to the west there's no land till you get to Canada," says Lt Cdr Osbaldestin.

"The tide is ferocious. The strongest tidal conditions in the UK are just along the coast in the Pentland Firth.

"Although it's not as bad at Cape Wrath, there's still a very strong westerly tidal stream so we have to manage our dives around the favourable tide times."

"Otherwise, it's actually quite pleasant diving off Garvie – the water's about as clear as you'll get in the UK."

Most of the diving is conducted in shallow waters – the reef rises to just 13ft below the surface of the ocean, the bed of the trough is only around 50ft down.

So shallow and clear water? Sounds almost benign. It's not. You *never* take diving for granted.

Lt Cdr Osbaldestin stresses: "Any ordnance disposal is dangerous. 500 or 1,000lbs of explosive have failed to go off as designed after falling out of the sky at a hell of a speed – and you don't know why the fuse has failed to function.

"They shouldn't go off inadvertently, but there are a lot of unknowns."

If all goes well – and it did – then this concerted spell of seek and destroy is about as good as it gets in the RN diving community

"It's fantastic," says the group's CO. "The lads love it. Lots of diving.

"That intensity is thoroughly satisfying. It is hard work, but if the weather is good, then the experience is absolutely stunning."

Although both Garvie Island and Cape Wrath are heavily used by all three Services (Apaches, the guns of the Fleet, RAF jets among others) this is a part of the world largely unspoiled by human habitation and beloved by wildlife.

The team blew up several bombs simultaneously to minimise the disruption instead of BANG. BANG. BANG...

But when there was a bang, depending on the depth of water, there was a sizeable plume.

"When you've got a sound wave travelling across the surface of the water at 1,500 metres per second, you certainly feel it in the boat."

When the divers were done in the water, they moved ashore on to Garvie Island itself where another bomb needed detonating.

If you blow up a live bomb, there's nothing left – everything is pretty much pulverised. If you blow up a drill bomb, however, you merely shatter the device.

And so this unforgiving lump of Scottish granite is littered with the detritus of bombs, tail units especially.

The net result of all this top bombing? "The island looks pretty much like the surface of Mars..."

Back to civilisation... Throughout the disposal mission, the divers stayed in the remote village of Durness (which is three hours by car, or four hours by public transport from Inverness...).

"We often field a team in the local Highland Games – it's good for community relations – but this year the dates didn't match," says the diving group CO.

"We did send a bunch of flowers as a 'thank-you' to our hosts. They were delivered on the bus from Inverness."

The japes off Wrath (sorry) once again reinforced the size of the diving group's domain.

"We cover a *huge* area," Lt Cdr Osbaldestin emphasises.

"In the South there's sometimes the assumption that Scotland stops at Glasgow and Edinburgh. If we're called out to Loch Ewe, it's a six-hour drive; the Shetlands, it's an overnight job."



Fit for promotion?

AS A Physical Training Instructor in the Royal Navy from 1953-81, I considered the overall fitness of RN personnel to be below average.

It was, I admit, the responsibility of the PT branch to promote sport and recreation, but only in training establishments was it considered mandatory.

An RN Fitness Test was introduced in the late 1970s early 1980s and it was linked to promotion.

The article *Your Path to Promotion* (September) uses well-known words such as leadership, discipline, inspiration, motivation and management.

Surely the fitness of an individual must be included, it certainly is with our Royal Marines, although I do accept the requirements of being a Royal Marine are different to a seaman, chef or engineer, but there must surely be a certain level of fitness?

The *Navy News* clearly does not think RN personnel are fit, as all your captions, cartoons, and even the thinking sailor for your list of requirements to publish a letter depicts an overweight sailor.

I attended the Olympic Games and observed the RN doing a great job, but was surprised

and disappointed in the general appearance of the average sailor, male and female.

Is it therefore time for a rethink of the Physical Fitness of the Royal Navy?

– Harry Pimblett, Larkfield, Kent

Captain Mark Durkin, Captain Naval Physical Development, told Navy News: "The article which Mr Pimblett refers to is part of Drafty's Corner, which usually contains issues and advice relating to promotion and report writing.

"Whilst it did not refer specifically to fitness, it is a well-established principle in the Royal Navy that if you are not in date for your annual fitness test (RNFT) or do not have an exemption from the test, you will not be considered for promotion.

"This fitness requirement is enforced rigorously and has resulted in recent years in over 500 ratings and approximately 160 officers not being considered for promotion.

"Mr Pimblett will be pleased to know that we have conducted a full review of the RNFT, and will be introducing a strength test element to the existing aerobic tests from January 2013."

Speedy scrub for tot tub

A FEW weeks ago I celebrated my 90th birthday.

Unbeknown to me, my daughter had arranged for me to meet the captain and staff of HMS Victory at the historic dockyard in Portsmouth.

We were very honoured to be entertained in the staff's private rest-room.

After some very interesting conversation the subject of rum cropped up (at this point, a large tot of Pusser's rum materialised).

This reminded me of an incident which occurred in 1942 on HMS Birmingham.

We had left Bombay en route to Cape Town when three lifeboats were spotted. On closing in on them we realised that they were packed to the gun's with both men and women, with many more clinging to the lifelines around the boats and others floating around on bits of flotsam.

It appeared that their ship had been torpedoed en route to Durban. They were Indians proceeding to South

Africa to take up employment.

After taking them all aboard, they were packed into the waist of the ship and other open spaces on the upper deck.

Unfortunately, the ornate oak rum tub was kept in the waist!

In the morning, the Marine butcher (who poured the required amount of water into the tub before the neat rum was added later) lifted the lid and was horrified to find that the Indians had used the tub as a toilet during the night! Big panic!

Pusser's hard soap, sand, caustic soda, soft soap, disinfectant and other detergents were hastily employed before the neat rum arrived.

Regulations and tradition state that the Grog had to be issued from the tub. So eventually, the water and rum were mixed and issued to the rum-bosuns.

I don't remember anyone refusing their tot of Nelson's Blood!

– C A 'Tom' Day, Poole, Dorset

From virtual to real

YOU might like to have the names of the Yangtze Incident veterans who appear in the photograph in the feature *From desktop to dock* (page 16, October)

From the left they are: John Dunstan (HMS Black Swan); Ray Calcott; Jim Bryson; Arnold

Sampson; Justice Hawkins; Bryan Loving; Stewart Hett (President, Amethyst Association).

In front, Eric Mustoe, chairman of the Amethyst Association, and Professor Stone.

– Stewart Hett, Northwood, Middlesex

Opinion

FOR the past couple of years we have marvelled at the process of building the Royal Navy's biggest warship.

Massive blocks have been fabricated at yards around the UK and floated to an enormous dry dock at Rosyth for assembly.

From a seemingly-random assortment of very unshiplike steel components, the shape of the future HMS Queen Elizabeth is now becoming more discernible.

One more 'superblock' is to be transported to the Babcock facility in the next few weeks, and around two-thirds of the flight deck is already in place.

But cold metal and a snake's wedding of cabling are only part of the story – and last month saw another chapter opened.

A small group of Royal Navy personnel officially joined the mighty ship, with junior rate Claire Butler having the honour

Discordant notes on Hood's bell

IT IS disappointing that the mission to recover HMS Hood's bell was unsuccessful, due in part to adverse weather conditions at sea level and underwater.

As one of the very few surviving veterans – I served in Hood as a midshipman in 1938-39 – my immediate reaction to the mission was that the wreck of Hood is the grave of the 1415 members of the ship's company who died on May 24 1941 and that the recovery of the bell is in contradiction of the 'look but don't touch' basis.

I should add that I am aware there are some

people who feel there should be no exception to this.

However, the bell, being a physical object, has a sentimental and lasting value and will provide proof of the Royal Navy's greatest disaster in World War 2, when located in the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth dockyard.

I have accordingly given my support to its recovery, as have three other veterans with whom I am in contact, as also did Lt Ted Briggs, the last of the three survivors who died recently.

In any further attempt to recover the bell we wish it all success.

– Cdr Keith Evans, Vice Chairman, HMS Hood Association, Haslemere, Surrey

...AM I a lone voice in that I don't want Hood's bell taken from her?

It would be as though she has been decommissioned.

Please let my brother Ronald and all in her remain undisturbed and at peace.

– Reg Gale, ex PO Royal Leamington Spa

Cheering up the light-blue boys

IN 1966 I was serving with 230 Squadron at RAF Labuan in North Sabah, Borneo.

The Confrontation War was still active and our Westland Whirlwind HAR 10 helicopters were supporting the troops in the jungle on the mainland.

However, the truth was that after three to four Gurkhas had climbed into a Whirlwind with all their kit, plus the aircrew's armour plating and LMG, they were lucky if they made the mainland at all.

Something had to be done, so the RAF was bailed out by the Royal Navy!

As the Whirlwind was a single-engined helicopter and had a limited carrying capacity, it was decided to send 845 and 848 squadrons out to assist.

To this end, the Commando carriers HMS Albion, RO7, and Bulwark, RO8, were dispatched to Labuan Bay alternately and the twin-engined Wessex Squadrons deployed to RAF Labuan.

When the 845 Squadron ground crews arrived they immediately cottoned on to the situation and quickly got to clandestine work.

When I got to the aircraft line the next day, I saw a brand-new signpost pointing towards our smaller Whirlwinds, on it were the words *Static Display Squadron* – a wry Naval view of our Confrontation efforts!

The RN ground crews expanded the Sergeants' Mess by ten to 20 per cent and were a fantastic bunch of chaps.

It seemed to me that every one of them had talent, playing a piano or harmonica, stand-up comedy, Zulu Warrior, poetry reading, mainly limerick (but not as you know it!) you name it, they could do it.

The mess became a cauldron of entertainment and friendships formed.

Their tales of the sea fascinated us, tall or otherwise, and cost us many cans of Tiger beer.

Soon a bunch of us were invited to look over the Albion.

We duly fetched up at the carrier and clambered aboard. One of our new pals shouted, "This way!" and we went below.

Five minutes later our host guides promptly vanished, leaving us to wander up ladder and down, totally lost!

We had caught wind that this



● Relax, the Navy's here! Sgt Paul Moran pursuing the war effort in a Jack Holt GP14 dinghy in Labuan Bay in 1966. HMS Albion is in the background.

jape would happen the previous beer-filled night, a matelot let slip over a Tiger beer.

Nonetheless, we could do nothing about it, until our hosts magically reappeared and led us to tots of rum, which were hidden everywhere.

Later that year, Albion left for the UK after an 18-month Far East commission, and the mess emptied of our Royal Naval chums, actually the goodbyes in the Mess bar were quite tearful, as some men get when they're unaccompanied by wives.

The next day, the place was like a morgue as things got back to normal.

I have never forgotten the presence of 845 and 848 squadrons at Labuan.

They lifted us RAF chaps immensely and life became a real pleasure whilst they were around.

I never saw any of them again but if any of you are reading this – thanks chaps for making my time in Borneo a real pleasure.

PS I wonder if that sign is still around

somewhere? – Paul Moran, ex-Sgt, RAF, Chippenham, Wiltshire



Clearly Exploit

FOLLOWING the letter *Loyal service – in all but name* (October) I attach a photograph of HMS Exploit as she was when used by the RNXS.

Her name was quite clearly, EXPLOIT, and at the time she had a black hull in keeping with other ships within the RNXS.

Before the RNXS was disbanded I was one of the skippers when in use in Scotland.

– Jeff Wilson (ex Auxiliary Officer and Skipper) Strachur, Argyll

ROYAL NAVY NEWS

Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

November 2012
no.700: 58th year

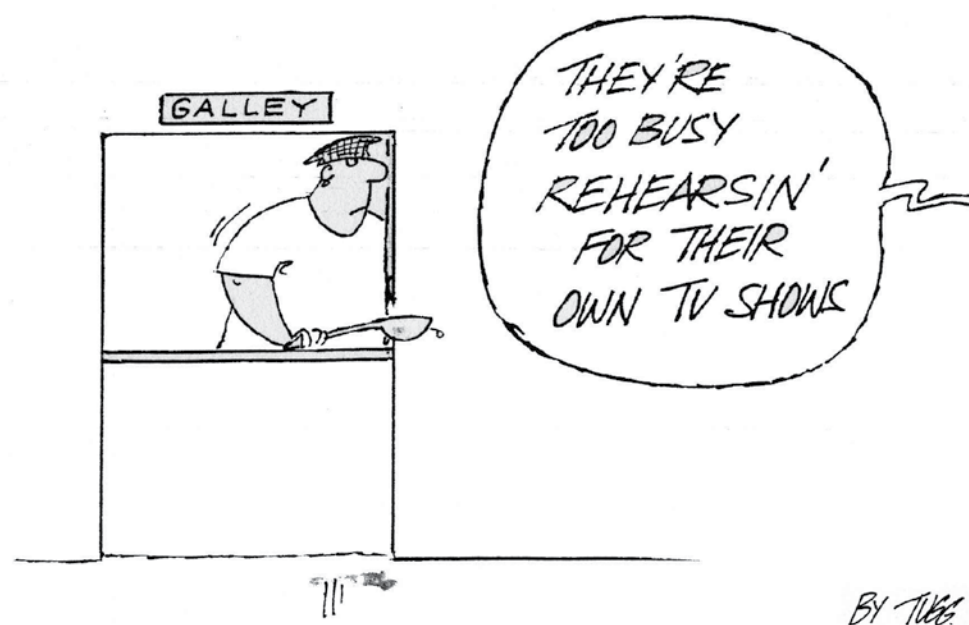
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CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGG



All hail a new Ajax

MAY I apologise unreservedly to the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans' Association and all who served on the World War 2 cruiser and Leander-class frigate of that name, following the insensitive and inappropriate comments made by me in the letter published in October about names for the new Astute-class submarines.

I meant no offence. Furthermore, I can confirm that these were my own comments and not those of the publisher or editor of *Warship World* magazine.

I hope that there will be an HMS Ajax in memory of all those ships which have previously carried this name together with their crews and that the submarine will have a long and distinguished career.

— C J A Cope, Cornwall

...THE letter from C J A Cope concerning the naming of future HM ships was discussed at the AGM of the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans' Association held on October 4.

Members were in agreement that the disingenuous comments of the author were in extremely poor taste and an insult to the crew who fought at the battle in 1939.

I am sure he is aware of the part the cruiser HMS Ajax, in conjunction with HMS Exeter and HMS Achilles, played in the Battle of the River Plate — an action described by Churchill “in this sombre, dark

winter [...] the brilliant action of the Plate [...] came like a flash of light and colour on the scene [...] and warmed the cockles of the British heart,” comments made as the effects of World War 2 were beginning to be felt in Britain.

In addition, is he aware that the town of Ajax, near Toronto, was named after the cruiser — thus making HMS Ajax the first ship to have a town named after her!

So much for the name of Ajax being more likely to conjure up thoughts of a kitchen cleaner!

Indeed, the Mayor of Ajax was keen to encourage the Canadian authorities to name one of their next ships Ajax.

So despite what Mr Cope thinks, the time when one of the Astute-class submarines is commissioned as HMS Ajax cannot come soon enough — it is hoped that the keel may be laid in 2014 in the year in which the 75th anniversary of the battle will be celebrated with the unveiling of a memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum and also a lunch in Portsmouth on December 13.

It is sad to report that two of the crew who served at the battle sadly crossed the bar in the first ten days of October — leaving less than a dozen members of the Association who were serving on December 13 1939.

— Peter Danks, Chairman, HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans' Association

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E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

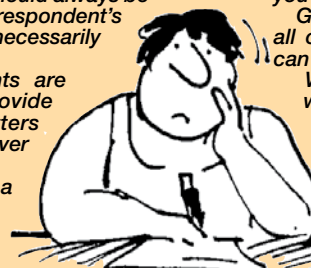
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you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



Still puzzled by numbers

WITH reference to the letters about official numbers (September and October) I joined the Navy at HMS Ganges in September 1952, and was given the official number JX 912132.

We were all given JX numbers, and informed that, as we would be trained as Telegraphists, Signalmen or Seamen, JX indicated 'General Service'.

Later a prefix letter was added. I became a P/JX number, with P indicating that Portsmouth was to be my home port, and others had either C for Chatham or D for Devonport.

When we joined it was for a 12-year engagement, but at 18 we were given the opportunity to change to '7&5', seven years' regular and five on reserve.

I opted for 7&5 and my official number changed from P/JX to P/SSX, indicating that I was now on a Short Service engagement.

I think it was in 1956 that a new nine-year engagement was

introduced to replace the 7&5 and 12-year ones. Those ratings on a 7&5 engagement were offered an increase in basic pay if they signed for the extra two years.

I was tempted by the extra cash, but not by the extra two years, so compromised by volunteering for service in submarines, with 7/6d a day submarine pay and 1/- for every night you slept aboard — 'hard layers'!

Some compromise!

— C H Saunders, Portsmouth

...I FOUND Joe Dolman's letter *Cracking the numbers code* (October) very interesting, but he got a little bit of it wrong.

I was a Pompey rating and when I started my 'man's time' from being in boy's time I went from 12 years' continuous service to seven and five, and my number then became P/SSX.

How can he explain this anomaly?

— Gerry Gerhard, Armadale, Western Australia

Ark Royal (91) calling

ALTHOUGH my father, William Squires, had served in other ships previously, he was an AA2 in HMS Ark Royal from February 1939 to November 1941 and was on board when she was torpedoed off Gibraltar.

He will be 92 years old next February and we wondered how many other crew members from that period were still alive?

— Pat Smith

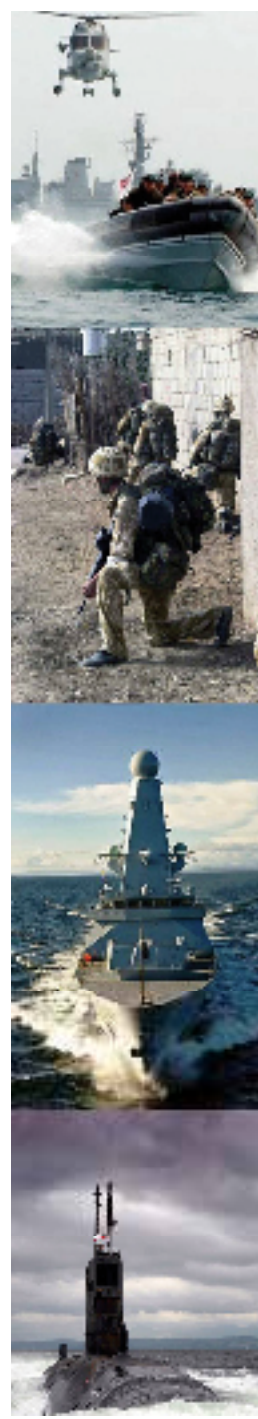
Swan songs

MIGHT the Ships' Name Committee consider a blast from the past in the shape of the Black Swan class?

There are plenty to choose from: Black Swan obviously, and others such as Starling, Plover, Redpoll, Magpie, Wren, Sparrow, Swift, Peacock, Snipe, Crane, Cygnet and Swallow.

I'm sure the Duke of Edinburgh would be very chuffed to see the Magpie cap-tally again.

— Ron Logie, ex FCMEM, Southsea



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Reward for work on Rock

NAVAL personnel serving in Gibraltar were among those who were recognised at a Commander British Forces presentation ceremony, presided over by CBF Cdre Tom Karsten.

WO1 Stephen Drayton was presented with a Clasp to his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, awarded to non-commissioned personnel who have demonstrated 30 years of exemplary and irreproachable conduct.

WO1 Drayton has held a number of senior Marine Engineering positions including ME Warrant Officer in HMS Ark Royal.

Lt Richard Cleaves received a CBF Commendation for his pivotal role in the implementation of the Defence Information Infrastructure in Gibraltar.

This was a complex computer network upgrade of 700 devices and over 1,000 accounts, and Lt Cleaves won praise for his good-humoured problem solving, enthusiasm and tenacity under pressure.

CPOMA Nicholas Clark received a Commendation for his work on the management of the newly-established Gibraltar Patient Admin Cell.

And William Mauro was also awarded a CBF Commendation for his work as a tailor – an MOD employee for 24 years, Mr Mauro's workload significantly increased in the past 18 months as a result of public duties in London and Diamond Jubilee commitments.

The final commendation went to the Gibraltar SSAFA Committee for their outstanding fundraising organisation – during the past two years Gibraltar SSAFA raised over £22,000 and has given out £20,000 in grants.

A teenager no more

FRIGATE HMS Montrose celebrated her 20th birthday in the summer – and members of her ship's company decided to mark the fact that she is no

longer a teenager.

The Plymouth-based ship was launched on July 31 1992 at the Yarrow yard on the Clyde.

So her sailors took time out



● Craig Hillson (centre) at HMS Sultan with his father Brian (right) and grandfather Phil

Family gathering

A PASSING out ceremony at HMS Sultan brought three generations of a military family together.

Craig Hillson has just completed his air technician training at the Gosport establishment.

Visiting from New Zealand was Craig's grandfather, ex-CPOAEA Phil Hillson, and Craig's father Brian, on leave from Afghanistan.

Brian served with the Royal Signals, and has worked as a civilian in Bosnia and Afghanistan. Other relatives also attended,

and were conducted on a tour of the Training Hangar by Craig.

Phil, who served in the Fleet Air Arm for 26 years, before emigrating, said: "I am very pleased that we could all get together for this event."

"It appears that Craig is following in my footsteps, because my first draft was to a Jungle squadron at Culdrose back in 1968."

"He makes me very proud, and I really envy him embarking on his new career."

from their busy schedule to celebrate that fact alongside at Devonport.

The Logistics department produced a cake to match the event, which was cut in the junior rates' dining hall by WO2 Chats Harris and ET(ME) Nick Pearce using a Naval ceremonial sword as a rousing rendition of *Happy Birthday to You* was belted out.

WO Harris was chosen for ceremonial duties because he was

also celebrating an anniversary of sorts – 23 years in the Royal Navy.

And ET(ME) Pearce was the sailor whose birthday was closest to that of the frigate – he turned 20 in March.

And 16 of his colleagues were not even born when Montrose went rattling down the slip in Scotland, launched by Lady Rifkind, wife of the then Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Malcolm Rifkind.

Live Bait Squadron in focus

A NEW book telling the story of three ships lost in World War 1 with Officer Cadets from Dartmouth on board, has been presented to Britannia Royal Naval College.

The Live Bait Squadron, was written by Dutch historian Henk van der Linden, and studies three obsolete cruisers, HM ships Cressy, Aboukir and Hogue, which were patrolling the southern North Sea on September 22 1914.

The ships had inexperienced crews and were picked off one by one by U-boat U-9, commanded by Lt Otto Weddigen.

The action lasted less than an hour, and Weddigen's grisly job was made simpler by the fact that each cruiser slowed to assist their stricken sisters; some 1,500 sailors died off neutral Holland.

Mr van der Linden was inspired to write the book after coming across a Cross of Sacrifice in a cemetery in The Hague, marking the graves of eight victims of U-9.

"This is where I began the quest, which eventually resulted in the book I am proud to present," said the author.

"It is eight years now since I



Picture: Craig Keating (BRNC)

happened to find the marks of what would soon appear to be one of the most pitiful events in British, and Dutch, naval history.

"This sad story kept haunting me and so I went on researching until I had a complete picture of all events."

"That picture I've tried to paint in the book."

BRNC's Archivist and museum curators Dr Richard Porter and Dr Jane Harrold were among those who helped Mr van der Linden

Flying visit

EIGHT members of the Royal British Legion Riders Branch have made their third annual visit to the RN Historic Flight (RNHF) at Yeovilton.

The riders, part of the fastest-growing branch in the Legion, went to find out more about the RNHF and to help spread the word about the work they do.

They were given a tour of the site, and a close look at the Fairey Swordfish and Sea Fury – and they helped push the latter back into the hangar.

The visit was arranged by former RO(T) Joe Legg, a Legion Rider and a member of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.

research his book, and as a result the author visited Dartmouth to present a copy to Cdr Jason Phillips, the Commander BRNC (pictured above).

During the visit Mr van der Linden was accompanied by documentary film-makers, who were particularly interested in a commemorative plaque in the College Chapel to 15-year-old Mid H L Riley, one of the 13 cadets mobilised from BRNC in August 1914, who died in the attack.

Back by Popular Demand

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Honorary degree for admiral

WHAT is the connection between protecting shipping from pirates in the Indian Ocean and Tesco Clubcards?

The answer is the University of Derby at Buxton, which will bestow honorary degrees on a senior Naval officer and the co-founder of the supermarket loyalty scheme.

Rear Admiral Peter Hudson (above) and Edwina Dunn will receive the awards at the university's graduation ceremony at the Devonshire Dome on the Buxton Campus this month.

The RN career of Rear Admiral Hudson, who was raised in the Chesterfield area, has spanned 32 years and included command of assault ship HMS Albion.

As a rear admiral, he was the Commander UK Maritime Forces, during which time he commanded European Union naval forces in the Indian Ocean on counter-piracy operations.

He is currently Chief of Staff (Capability) for the Navy and moves on to a senior NATO HQ appointment in February.

On hearing of his award, Rear Admiral Hudson said: "I am delighted and humbled to be awarded this Honorary degree from my home county university."

"Despite a career that has taken me around the world I still have a deep connection with Derbyshire and to be recognised in this way means a great deal to me."

"I am extremely grateful to the Chancellor and senior staff for this award. It will be treasured."

Buxton-born Edwina Dunn started a market analysis business with her husband Clive Humby from a spare bedroom in 1989, developing it into a global customer science company which helped Tesco create the Clubcard scheme in 1995.

Merlin debut on training course

A GROUP of RN recruits from HMS Raleigh have become the first to be flown by Merlin during disaster relief training.

The 56 recruits of Cunningham 03 Entry were taking part in the final exercise of their ten-week initial naval training course, known as Exercise Bright Diamond.

The three-day, two-night exercise is based around an RN operation to provide humanitarian aid and uses former minehunter HMS Brecon and Scraesdon Fort.

The helicopter was provided by 824 Naval Air Squadron, whose aircrew were pleased to get the chance to train in the trooping role and to fly into new locations.

Exercise Manager Lt Tom Rooney said: "The realism added by inserting sailors by helicopter into a 'remote' location during Exercise Bright Diamond cannot be underestimated."

"It provided the recruits with a great opportunity to see how the Royal Navy operates at sea, on land and in the air."

Hydrography award for Japanese expert

VETERAN Japanese hydrographer Dr Hideo Nishida has been presented with the UK Hydrographic Office's Alexander Dalrymple Award for his outstanding contribution to hydrography.

Dr Nishida's career has seen him work with the Japan Coastguard, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Japan Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department (JHOD).

The award in part acknowledged his leadership of the JHOD's swift and professional response to the March 2011 tsunami.

Alexander Dalrymple formed the Hydrographic Office in 1795.

Firefighter wins efficiency prize

THE outstanding contribution by a civilian firefighter to RN training has been recognised during a presentation at HMS Excellent.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Group Manager Dave Smith received the Phoenix efficiency prize to mark his contribution to RN firefighting training over the past 16 years.

During that time he has delivered presentations at Phoenix Training Group, the RN's firefighting school, lecturing both officers

and senior rates courses on the capabilities of British fire and rescue services and how they can help when a ship faces an emergency alongside in a British port.

Dave is passionate about developing a close working link between the Royal Navy and Hampshire Fire and Rescue, and is the first point of contact for naval base officials or ships.

He has often delivered presentations at short notice, or in his own time, and can be relied on

to go the extra mile to ensure the best possible training is delivered.

Lt Cdr Tim Bailey, Officer-in-Charge at Phoenix, said: "The benefit gained from Dave's presentations cannot be overstated."

"If the worst happens and there is a fire on board a ship alongside, the information that Dave has put across in his lectures could literally be the difference between life and death for a member of the crew."



Naval nurse takes civic health prize

A NAVAL Nurse has been awarded the title Portsmouth Mental Health Worker of the Year, recognising his outstanding contribution to nursing and patient care within the city and the wider Defence Mental Health Services.

CPONN Dean Whybrow (above) works as a Mental Health Nurse in the Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH) in Portsmouth Naval Base, serving all military personnel across the South of England.

Dean joined the Navy 15 years ago as a medic, and retrained as a Naval Nurse a few years later, going on to specialise in the field of mental health.

He has deployed to Afghanistan twice, both with 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines.

His citation highlights that his work has clearly enhanced mental health care delivery in the military and helped DCMH Portsmouth to be considered a model for best practice.

On picking up his award at a ceremony hosted by Portsmouth newspaper *The News*, CPONN Whybrow said: "It was both an honour and a privilege to receive this award."

"Hopefully my recognition by the *Portsmouth News* will be seen as a reflection of the tireless effort of the whole team in providing a high standard of care to military personnel in their time of need."



● Lt Stuart Marsh and son

Enterprising activities

FAMILIES and friends flocked to HMS Enterprise in Falmouth to see how their loved ones go about their work.

The survey ship staged an open day with plenty of activities to highlight the eventualities for which sailors have to be prepared, including firefighting and first aid. Enterprise's CO, Cdr Derek Rae, said: "Despite a busy programme and preparations for any future deployments, having families on board was always a top priority."

"My ship's company have pride in their ship and the impact of being able to share that with our loved ones by actually having them on board, if only for a few hours, cannot be underestimated."

The day ended at the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club for children's entertainers, barbecue and a never-ending supply of ice cream.

URNU student joins Portuguese barque

A MEMBER of Manchester and Salford URNU spent five weeks on exchange with the Portuguese Navy – which involved sailing a magnificent tall ship in the Mediterranean.

Clare Cornes, a second year mechanical engineering student, was given a place on board NRP Sagres, owned and used by the Portuguese Navy to train cadets at their naval academy.

Built in Hamburg in 1937, the Sagres has been part of the Portuguese Navy since 1961, undertaking expeditions around the world, although her current primary use is the training of Portuguese naval cadets.

This summer the Portuguese Navy invited cadets from foreign countries to join the barque's crew of 150 in the Western Med.

Along with cadets from the USA, France and Germany, as well as second-year students from the Portuguese Naval Academy, Clare visited Madeira, Spain and numerous ports in Portugal during the cruise.

Clare, along with the other international cadets, was assigned a Portuguese cadet who helped them adjust to working with the Portuguese navy.

"All my duties and watches on board were spent with my cadet and the other members of our team," said Clare.

"Depending on the time of the duty we were required to complete different tasks."

"During the day a lot of time was spent climbing the huge masts and doing rope and rigging work."

"We also spent a lot of time using charts and shadowing the officer on duty or officer of the day."

While at sea, cadets were given a rota of duties taking four hours out of every twelve on watch.

This could involve navigating,



● Portuguese Navy tall ship NRP Sagres

time at the helm or assisting the officer of the watch.

During Clare's stint on board Sagres the ship was entering in one stage of the 2012 Tall Ships Race, and she led the Parade of Sail out of Lisbon.

"To be at the head of the Tall Ships Race was a brilliant experience, and to sail out of Lisbon past all of her beautiful coastal landmarks was something I will never forget," said Clare.

As well as her duties Clare took part in all the usual internationally adopted exercises.

"This mainly consisted of press ups, sit ups, burpees and running on the deck," she said.

"We also had different sporting activities held which everyone was invited to join in."

"Football was regularly played and obstacle courses were set up on deck."

After taking part in the race the Sagres spent four days in Cadiz, keeping the ship open to visitors, before leaving for Porto.

"While in port we had days off and duty days, during which we were required to stand on the deck and welcome visitors on to the ship," said Clare, who added that during one of the long 'ship open to visitors' days, some 15,000 people came on board – after which there was a duty security

watch with a marine.

On route to Porto a ceremony was conducted on board the Sagres as she passed the most westerly tip of Europe.

Some of Clare's URNU colleagues were also undertaking a challenging deployment as she tackled the Med – though in not quite such exotic surroundings.

Alongside colleagues from Bristol, Oxford and Cambridge URNUs, the students joined Archer-class patrol boat HMS Biter for almost a fortnight in home waters, visiting a number of ports including Milford Haven, Padstow, Guernsey and Aberystwyth.

Moscow contest

A ROYAL Navy officer has returned from Moscow where he formed part of the British team at the World Helicopter Championships.

Lt Jim Fraser was paired with Flt Lt Mark Lazenby of the RAF in the British Forces second team.

Both Forces teams were made up from instructors from the tri-Service Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS) at RAF Shawbury, and two of the school's Squirrel aircraft were provided for the competition by owner-operators FBHeliServices.

Some 50 teams took part in the competition – more than half from Russia or Belarus – and the Forces first team took silver in the team event.



● Carol Pearce, Jimmy James and Mike Moulton with the old trunk at Bodmin General station

Old trunk label sparks reunion

JIMMY James, a volunteer fireman on the Bodmin and Wenford Railway, recently noticed a battered old trunk on the porter's trolley at Bodmin General station.

Or rather, he noticed the writing on it: '2/O C A Ormerod WRNS, RNAS Culdrose, Helston, Cornwall' – which he immediately recognised as the name of a former colleague in the control tower at Culdrose from 40 years ago.

Through the Fleet Air Arm Officers Association Jimmy managed to track down Carol Pearce, née Ormerod, to Constantine in Cornwall, and following a few conversations by phone the pair, plus former

colleague Mike Moulton from Porthleven, met for lunch at the station buffet in Bodmin.

Carol was delighted to be reunited with her trunk, and much reminiscing followed about the trials and tribulations of FAA meteorologists in the 1960s and 70s.

Between them the three clocked up more than 50 years of service for the Royal Navy, and all are now busy in retirement – Carol opening her magnificent garden to the public, Mike also gardening and spending time with his family in Australia, and Jimmy following his boyhood passion for steam railways.



'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'



Double Charter challenge

THE RNA is to mark the diamond jubilee of its first Royal Charter next year with the creation of a new memorial at the national Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Under the title Charter Challenge 2014, shipmates have been issued with a double challenge – raise money for the project, and also submit suggestions for the design of the memorial.

And as part of the initiative, the National Council has accepted a proposal by No 8 Area to host the 2014 National Conference at the Royal Court Hotel in Coventry, just 25 miles from the Arboretum, which will allow the parade and memorial dedication to take place on Conference Sunday.

The National Council (NC) is keen to ensure that all members and branches have the opportunity to contribute ideas, suggestions, comments and even possible designs for the memorial, rather than have its own ideas imposed upon the membership.

It has therefore been decided that a competition will be held, open to the whole Association, to submit possible designs, or ideas for designs, to HQ.

The NC will set up an assessment panel to review the entries and extract what they feel are the best to present to the full NC to consider.

The NC will then recommend a final shortlist to present to Conference 2013 in Liverpool for delegates to vote upon.

This will leave a year in which to get the memorial created and installed ready for Conference 2014.

Design considerations should include size, shape and material (granite, Portland stone etc); the type of data and images to appear on the memorial; and specifics regarding close areas around the memorial (pathways etc).

The final date for submissions is February 1 2013, with shortlisted designs being sent out to branches at the end of March.

A prize of £250 and two bottles of Pussers Blue Label Rum will be awarded to the member/branch submitting the winning design and that member, or member of that branch, will be invited to share in the unveiling of the memorial.

The NC has already allocated a budget of £50,000 towards this RNA Memorial project.

This will be a memorial not only to all former RNA shipmates but to all former Naval personnel, irrespective of arm, branch or rank – and the more donations received, the more impressive a memorial that can be created.

It is hoped to include at least one special interactive code to enable visitors to the memorial to see a list of all those donors who have contributed to its creation.

Channel Dash memorial unveiled



● The Swordfish flypast at the unveiling of the Op Fuller memorial
Picture: LA(Phot) Chris Mumby

A FLYPAST by the Fairey Swordfish of the Royal Naval Historic Flight was one of the highlights of a ceremony in Dover to unveil a memorial to the participants in Operation Fuller.

Fuller was the British attempt to halt an eastbound Channel Dash by German capital ships in February 1942, and a memorial was unveiled in Marine Parade Gardens by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

Sailors from HMS Kent formed the honour guard, and guests included the sons of the two main

protagonists in 1942 – Maj Gen Charles Ramsay, whose father Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay did his best to thwart the passage of the Germans, and Vice Admiral Otto Ciliax, son of Admiral Otto Ciliax.

The appearance of the Swordfish was a poignant reminder of the sacrifice made by 825 Naval Air Squadron, which provided six of the torpedo-bombers for the operation.

Only five of the 18 crew, led by Lt Cdr Eugene Esmonde VC, survived the attack as all six aircraft were shot down.

Fight to save frigate will continue

THE fight to save HMS Plymouth is to continue, despite the decision by a group of veterans to give up the struggle.

The HMS Plymouth Association announced that "its involvement in the fight to save their old ship has finally come to an end."

The group adds they have now "reluctantly concluded" that "the end is in sight for our 'old ship' and the time has come to be realistic and admit that there is nothing more which can be done to save her."

The statement acknowledges that "the sentiments of 'HMS Plymouth Trust Ltd' and their ambitions for what they wish to achieve for the cadets (quite possibly our future Navy) are more than honourable, we have to remember that at over 50 years old she has very little relevance to today's Navy and would not afford any great understanding to the cadets of the technology currently in use on board a modern warship."

"It would be nice to think, that as a purely sentimental or historic symbol she could be put to further good use, but at her age we believe it does not make economic sense to lavish millions of pounds on something which would have a very limited lifespan of around ten years at most."

"Whilst wishing the Trust well in its continuing endeavours, it is with regret that we are unable to offer further support in the on-going attempts to save her."

The response on the Trust website was immediate: "We would like to reiterate that the HMS Plymouth Trust will continue to fight to save HMS Plymouth."

"We are more convinced than ever that HMS Plymouth does have a permanent and more than viable future."

"The support we have had has been tremendous and if you ask the people in the street if HMS Plymouth should be saved the overwhelming majority say 'yes' she should be."

"We have a berth, people prepared to help survey her and the offer of a tug to tow her to a permanent berth."

The Trust added that while money will always be a consideration, the power of volunteers should not be ignored, and if the ship could be obtained from owners Peel Ports then new lines of funding could be opened up.

"We would therefore just confirm that the HMS Plymouth Trust will continue as normal and have no intention of giving up the fight to save this historic warship, and would ask for your continuing support," the statement concludes.

For more details of the campaign to save the ship, which saw action in Borneo, the Cod Wars and the Falklands, see www.hmsplymouthtrust.co.uk

Type 42 Association standard is ready

FRIDAY morning divisions at HMS Collingwood took on particular significance for a select group of sailors and ex-matelots when the newly-formed Type 42 Association's standard was blessed during proceedings.

S/M Dean Deakins, a Babcock employee and Close Range Weapon Instructor at the Fareham training establishment, is the association's Parade Marshal, and was instrumental in obtaining the standard.

Keen to parade it before the Trafalgar Day and Remembrance Day parades, Dean approached the Chief of Parade at Collingwood, CPO Buck Taylor, to see if they could help out.

Dean said: "With the kind co-operation of Chaplain Janice Honey Morgan, Padre at the Friday morning Divisions, I was permitted to parade the standard at Prayers, where it was blessed by Rev Morgan, thereby paving the way for it to be paraded at ceremonial events."



● S/M Dean Deakins, Parade Marshal of the Type 42 Association, with the group's new standard, flanked by HMS Collingwood's Chaplain Janice Honey Morgan and Cdr Duncan Forer, Commander Training Support at Collingwood

On the decision to develop the Type 42 Association, Chairman S/M Bob Mullen said: "With 14 Type 42s commissioned in the RN, most 42s have separate reunions every year."

"We just thought it would be a good idea to amalgamate everyone into one T42 Association, for one big reunion every couple of years."

Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, Honorary President of the

association, said: "The Type 42s, and more importantly many members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, have played their part in a most memorable part of our Navy's history."

"Each and every destroyer has its own distinctive history, yet the force as a whole has formed the backbone of our nation's maritime history over the past 40 years."

"They and their people have fought with honour and distinction in all our major conflicts, and contributed to the success of most of the minor operations since the first Type 42 became operational in the 1970s."

"Those who have served in these 14 destroyers have been a true band of brothers."

The association aims to have a major reunion on July 13 2013 at HMS Excellent, and they hope some 5,000 ex-42ers will join them.

Details of how to join the association and its activities – it is supporting the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity – are at www.type42association.co.uk

Poem presented to the Queen

THE RNA has made a unique presentation to the Queen as a Diamond Jubilee gift.

Association General Secretary Capt Paul Quinn discovered an unknown poem by the Poet Laureate in 1952, John Masefield (famous for the poem *Sea Fever* – 'I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky...'), deep in the archives of the RNA.

The poem was commissioned by the National Council in 1952 for the RNA reunion brochure.

S/M Paul also unearthed the letters commissioning the poem in a document depository in Austin, Texas.

The poem, written in August 1952, after the Queen acceded to the throne, speaks of the challenges facing her and how the RNA and her sailors will support her.

The National Council thought that this would make an appropriate presentation.

The poem, with John Masefield's accompanying letter, were framed with a letter of Loyal Greeting and presented at a celebratory



● RNA National President Vice Admiral John McAnally presents the framed poem and letter to the Queen's Assistant Private Secretary, Doug King, watched by members of the National Council

lunch at the Naval and Military Club in London to the Queen's Assistant Private Secretary, Doug King, who accepted on her behalf.

The poem was then taken to Balmoral for the Queen to see, and the RNA has received a note back to say that 'Her Majesty was very touched to receive this gift'.

The poem has been reproduced on a Jubilee commemorative certificate, available to all members through their branch or the HQ.

The copyright to the poem – which is technically described as 'unrecorded verse' – is held by the Literary Guild on behalf of the Masefield Estate.

Bruce veterans continue to meet

AFTER the decommissioning of the HMS Bruce Association, several members felt that the move had been a little premature, so one of them decided to do something about it.

As a result, a party of 38 members and their partners held an impromptu gathering in Scarborough, and decided it would be worth repeating.

A provisional booking has been made for the next reunion from September 30 to October 2 2013, and ex-shipmates interested should contact S/M Reg Maycock at 38 Kirkfield Avenue, Thorner, Leeds LS14 3EL.

Sheppey loses founder member

SHIPMATES at the Isle of Sheppey branch are mourning the loss of one of their founder members.

Former Chief Coxswain S/M Jack Cornwell, who had died at the age of 92, joined the Mob in 1937 and served for more than 30 years.

He survived the sinking of HMS Welshman in the Mediterranean in February 1943 – the fast minelayer was transporting stores and personnel to Tobruk when she was hit by a torpedo and sank in two hours with the loss of 155

people, including two civilians.

As a consequence S/M Jack, and the daughter of one of the senior officers lost with the ship, worked hard to instigate an annual memorial ceremony.

He also served as an instructor at HMS Ganges, and despite the establishment's reputation, he was so fondly remembered that a small group of his trainees sought him out 40 years later to meet up and wine and dine Jack.

Jack was one of the original members of the Isle of Sheppey branch, which started up in 1982.



RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
admin@royalnavalassoc.com
023 9272 3747
www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

Chairman is guest at Irish dinner

THE Irish Naval Association celebrated its 50th anniversary with a formal dinner at the Greshams Hotel in Dublin, and National Chairman S/M Chris Dovey was given a warm welcome as the RNA representative.

The INA have had close links with individual RNA branches over recent years, and in 2011 a strong contingent and their National Standard participated in the RNA Biennial Parade in Whitehall.

Since then strong ties have been established between the RNA and the INA at national level, and the INA will be attending National Conference in Liverpool next summer, as well as attending the Biennial Parade in Whitehall again.

S/M Chris congratulated the INA on their anniversary and said it was the sincere hope of the RNA that the strong ties that had developed between the associations would continue to flourish.

On behalf of the RNA he accepted a Waterford crystal bowl engraved with the INA crest from INA President S/M Gerry Kennedy.

S/M Chris said he had a great night and had received individual invites to return to Waterford, Limerick and Dublin again.

He said he looked forward to having an RNA contingent attending some of the INA events in the future.

Ernie receives his medal

A HARD-working member of the Cheshunt and Waltham Cross branch has been presented with his British Empire Medal.

S/M Ernie Havers won the award for his work in the community with the local Sea Cadet unit, of which he is president, and extensive charity work including support for the Arthritis Society and the Poppy Day appeals.

Branch chairman S/M Eric Robinson arranged a guard of honour comprising six Sea Cadets and six members of the branch as S/M Ernie received his medal from the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, the Countess of Verulam.

Memorial to a hero reinstated in Leith

ROYAL Marines past and present gathered around the newly-restored and rebuilt memorial to the last man in the Corps to earn Britain's highest military honour (right).

The monument, to Cpl Thomas Peck Hunter, now stands outside Leith's Ocean Terminal after a three-year absence.

It was originally erected in 2002 at the front of the complex, but had to be removed nearly three years ago because of proposed work to build a tramline past the centre.

With the cancellation of that section of the line it was decided to reinstate the memorial, which now sits on the waterfront.

Cpl Hunter is honoured because of his deeds in Italy in the final weeks of World War 2, when he fought with 43 Commando at one of their most famous actions – the battle for Lake Comacchio.

During the fighting around the lagoon, 50 miles south of Venice, Hunter seized a Bren gun and stormed German machine-gun positions, single-handedly capturing or driving the enemy away until he was cut down – but not before his troop reached safety. The action saw Hunter posthumously given the Victoria Cross, the last (to date) of ten VCs awarded to Royal Marines, and the only one awarded to the Corps throughout the 1939-45 war.

Attending the unveiling of his memorial were representatives from the RMA, the RMR and the RN Regional HQ in Scotland.

Veteran Tom Forrest, who is

Hydra reunion

A GROUP of officers who served in HMS Hydra while she acted as a hospital/ambulance ship during the Falklands Conflict have held a reunion dinner in London.

Capt Richard Campbell and 12 officers from the hydrographic survey ship met up on the Thames sailing barge Lady Daphne in St Katherine Docks.

Representatives then attended the Merchant Navy Commemorative Service at the Tower Hill memorial the following day.



one of the founders involved in setting up the original memorial, said: "It's important to preserve the memory of Thomas Hunter."

"We had help from Eric Milligan, a former Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who went to school with Hunter, and he'd suggested Leith as a possible location."

Col Graham Dunlop (ret'd), President of the RMA in Scotland, added: "For the Edinburgh branch the Thomas Hunter memorial is the most important one, and they hold a parade in his

honour each year.

"Now that the memorial has been replaced and in a more suitable location, I feel that's something we can build upon."

"Certainly next April's rededication ceremony aims to be a significant event, and we hope to raise the profile of one of Edinburgh's lesser-known heroes."

"Thomas Hunter epitomised the finest set of standards you could expect of anyone."

"He gave his life to save his friends, and that's certainly

something that we should be highlighting to people."

"I hope that the public will join us for the parade next April and recognise his sacrifice."

The main ceremony associated with the memorial has traditionally been the anniversary of Comacchio in April, and a major rededication parade is planned for next year.

Members of the re-formed 43 Cdo (Fleet Protection Group RM) will attend and it is hoped that Cpl Hunter's sister, 81-year-old Nancy Swinney, will also be there.

Air show success

MEMBERS of Christchurch branch were an integral part of the RN 'recruitment village' at the Bournemouth Air Show, gaining several new members for their own and other branches.

Not only did the shipmates enjoy talking to visitors, but they have also been invited back for next year's show.



● S/MS Lee Hayward and Terry Whitty of Liskeard branch

Sponsorship sought

TWO shipmates from Liskeard branch are to join the Jubilee Sailing Trust tall ship Lord Nelson.

Lee Hayward and Terry Whitty plan to fly to Cape Town in February, where they will join the Lord Nelson and participate in the South African legs of her around the world voyage.

The shipmates, who are both disabled, have described their proposed trip on the Lord Nelson – one of only two ships in the world designed and built to allow disabled and able bodied people to sail side by side as equals – as very exciting and the chance of a lifetime.

Invincibles mark 30th anniversary

THE HMS Invincible WO's & CPO's 82 Association met at the Royal Court Hotel in Coventry to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict.

The event took place almost 30 years to the day (17th September) when the ship arrived back from the South Atlantic after an historic 166 days at sea on active service.

During the morning 53 members visited the National Memorial Arboretum, and accompanied by a Royal Marines bugler and the resident chaplain, carried out a service of remembrance at the newly-dedicated SAMA82 Memorial, where the association president laid a wreath.

On completion of the ceremony a celebratory 'tot' was issued.

In the evening, prior to the Ladies' Celebration Dinner, the Corps of Drums of the RM School of Music Portsmouth carried out a stirring *Mess Beatings* – a very fitting curtain-raiser to the Association's 29th annual Ladies Dining In weekend.

Another reunion saw members of the ship's company from 1982 plus her builders, fitters and members of the trials team gather at the Duke of Edinburgh Hotel in Barrow-in-Furness.

This reunion is held annually, and further details are available from Tim Jenkins at g0nz0bign0se@aol.com or by calling 07753 766875.

Badges taken to Orkney

MEMBERS of Rosyth and West Fife branch travelled to the north of Scotland where they were joined by members of the Orkney branch to present around 100 ships' badges to a museum.

The plaques had been salvaged from a demolished building at HMS Caledonia in Rosyth, and were handed to Sheila Garson, the Curator of Lyness Naval Museum.

After the presentation, Orkney shipmates treated their guests to a tour of Hoy wartime sites, thanks to tour operator Kinlay Francis of 'Orkney Uncovered' – and a member of the local branch.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our September edition (right) was first named HMS Centaur, then HMS Tomahawk, and finally served as HMS Scorpion.

Mr R Smith, of Rushden, came up with the right answers in the right order, and wins our £50 prize.

This month's mystery submarine, above, was an Oberon-class boat built by Scotts at Greenock and launched on St Valentine's Day in 1964.

The submarine was paid off in the summer of 1993.

What was her name?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw



to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is slightly earlier than normal – December 5 2012 – because of our Christmas print schedule. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our January 2013 edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 213

Name

Address

My answer

Story of a monument

CEREMONIES are to be held this month and next in the UK and France to commemorate the 70th anniversary of an historic wartime raid on enemy ships in Bordeaux.

And the ceremonies coincide with the publishing of a new commemorative album on the creation of a memorial to the participants in Operation Frankton, more widely known as the Cockleshell Heroes raid.

Ten Royal Marines – known as the Royal Marines Boom Patrol Detachment, under the command of Maj 'Blondie' Hasler – were launched from the submarine HMS Tuna in early December 1942; a sixth canoe or 'cockle' was damaged on launch and never took part in the raid itself, which damaged six ships in the port of Bordeaux.

Eight of the ten men died on the operation – six executed by the

North and South

MEMBERS of the Greater Manchester branch of the Fleet Air Arm Association travelled south to Lee-on-the-Solent to attend a service of remembrance.

The service was held at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial on Marine Parade, where Manchester members were joined by local Hampshire shipmates.

Germans – with just Hasler and his 'crewman' Mne Bill Sparks eventually making their way home.

A memorial was unveiled at Pointe de Grave at the mouth of the Gironde last year, and the Op Frankton Memorial Project Souvenir Album – of which the oil painting above forms the cover – tells the story in French and English of how the memorial came about, complete with numerous photographs.

For details of the album and how to buy it, go to www.royalmarinesassociation.org.uk and click on 'Stop Press'.

The commemoration ceremonies will take place on November 4 in Southsea and December 7 and 8 in Bordeaux.

Former Royal Marines officer Lord Ashdown will be delivering a talk on Operation Frankton next month in support of his new book, *A Brilliant Little Operation*.

The talk will be at Sir Roger Manwood's School in Sandwich, Kent, on Monday December 3.

Tickets cost £7 (£5 concessions) and are available from the school office (see www.srms.kent.sch.uk for details).

All profits will go to Help for Heroes and Frankton Souvenir, an organisation dedicated to keeping the story in the public eye.

Taking your voice to the top

THE LAST month has seen several top level meetings and a steady stream of contact from families, writes *Emma Prince of the Naval Families Federation*. We have been listening to what you have to say and reporting up the Chain of Command and to policy makers...

The Fleet Commander and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, visited the NFF office in October to discuss family concerns.

The NFF has the ear of some senior military personnel and takes your concerns directly to them. We think that the top worry beads for families at the moment are: *churn, separation, and pay and allowances*.

Does this chime with you, or are there other key issues to highlight? Get in touch: admin@nff.org.uk.

Meeting with the Minister

As we mentioned in the previous edition of *Navy News*, we have a meeting planned with the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, the Rt Hon Mark Francois MP, on November 27.

What topics would you like raised? E-mail: admin@nff.org.uk.

Your feedback wanted: NFF web poll

Do you know what the Armed Forces Covenant is all about and how it is benefiting the Service community?

Please visit the NFF website to complete our short web poll and tell us your comments on the Covenant. Let's take a look at the latest news from the Covenant team:

Latest Armed Forces Covenant Developments

The MOD has recently announced new Government policies to help families under the Armed Forces Covenant.

It has launched the Defence Discount Service, and is extending

the Service Pupil Premium Scheme that provides financial support to children of Armed Forces personnel.

Defence Discount Service

The Defence Discount Service is open to members of the Armed Forces community, including serving and Reserves personnel, veterans, spouses/partners of personnel, and bereaved spouses/partners.

Many high profile companies are engaged with the Defence Discount Service, and the list is growing.

They are offering discounts on cars, lap-tops, supermarket, shops, clothing, cinema tickets, holidays, mobile phones and much more.

A wide range of discounts and privileges can be accessed online immediately – go to www.defencediscountservice.co.uk.

A privilege card is also a key part of the new Defence Discount Service and later this year it will be made available to members for a small cost, making it easier for people to access discounts in stores and online.

Service Premium

The Service Premium was introduced to provide extra funding to state schools in England that have Service children on their school roll.

The additional funding aims to help schools provide the extra support, mainly pastoral, needed to lessen the effects of frequent changes of school and the effects of separation from a serving parent deployed on operations.

Service children are not underachieving compared to their peers, but the Premium is provided in recognition of the additional support schools often need to provide.

The amount paid to each eligible child under the Service Premium will increase from £250 this year to £300 in 2013-14.

Children of military personnel who have died in service will now be eligible to access the Service Premium, and children of military personnel will continue to qualify after their parents have left the

Armed Forces, up to a maximum of six years.

It is for schools to decide how to use the Service Premium to best support their pupils.

Do you know how your child(s) school is spending the Premium? The NFF is keen to know how schools are allocating the funds.

A great example of the Service Premium in action is Alverstoke Church of England Junior School in Gosport, which held a meeting with Service parents to discuss how they felt the money should be used.

To find out more about the Armed Forces Covenant and how it relates to naval families, visit: www.mod.uk/covenant.

The NFF is part of the Covenant Reference Group and would like your feedback on the Covenant. Is it making progress in the right areas? What improvements would you like to be made? E-mail: admin@nff.org.uk.

Do you have a will?

Service personnel are encouraged to complete a will, and to update it immediately to reflect changes to personal circumstances (ie marriage, divorce, change of partner, death of a named beneficiary).

Changes to circumstances should also be updated on JPA.

The intention of a will is to ensure that a deceased person's estate (money, possessions and property) is distributed in accordance with the deceased's wishes.

Regular Service personnel, or those mobilised, can store their wills at the SPVA Document Handling Centre in Glasgow, free of charge.

Stored wills may be replaced at any time or returned upon request. If an individual holds a will privately its location and date should be recorded on JPA.

Personnel should read 2012DIN01-179 on the Defence Intranet for further details on the writing, recording, and storage of wills.

Power of Attorney

A Power of Attorney is a legal document whereby one person gives another person/persons the power to act on their behalf with regard to their health, welfare and/



● Fleet Commander and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sir George Zambellas visits the NFF office to meet Kim Richardson

or financial decisions.

The Power of Attorney can be limited to certain tasks and for a limited period, or it can be put in place for the future in case an individual becomes unable to make these decisions for themselves due to injury or absence etc.

Have you appointed a Power of Attorney? Visit the NFF website for information and advice.

Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC)

JCCC is a focal point for supporting UK Armed Forces casualties around the world.

A serving person's family may contact JCCC if a death, serious illness or family crisis has occurred.

In the most serious cases (serious illness/death) JCCC will get the serving person home the quickest way possible. JCCC also deals with death in service and casualty reporting, ensuring that the next of kin is informed.

Before being deployed overseas, all personnel are given a JPA 0001 Compassionate Leave Travel card

and fridge magnet.

These should be handed onto the family and kept somewhere safe.

The card and magnet contain contact details for JCCC and have a space to write in the serving person's Service number and rank; all the information you would be asked for if you were to contact the JCCC.

The JCCC can be contacted at any time of the day or night: Telephone: 01452 519 951 or Fax: 01452 510 807.

It is hoped that you will never have to contact the JCCC, but be assured if you do, there is always someone on the end of the line to help.

New Homeport Magazine

The latest edition of our magazine will be hitting the streets in late November. As always, it is packed full of news and information for Naval Service families. E-mail: editor@nff.org.uk to join the mailing list, and we will post a copy to you free of charge.

Keep in Touch

There are numerous ways to stay in touch with the NFF for breaking news and information of interest to you and your family.

Why not visit our website: www.nff.org.uk – it is updated as and when announcements are made. You can find us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, or join us on LinkedIn. Alternatively e-mail: editor@nff.org.uk to subscribe to our quarterly Homeport magazine, or e-mail: info@nff.org.uk for our e-update (sent every other month).

Contact Us

If you have any comments on the issues discussed in this article, or would like to raise a matter of concern, please e-mail the NFF on:

admin@nff.org.uk
or telephone: 023 9265 4374.
Postal correspondence can be sent to:
NFF,
Castaway House,
311 Twyford Avenue,
Portsmouth,
PO2 8RN.



TWO-SIX



● Brig Paul Harkness, Commander 51 Brigade, Veterans Minister Keith Brown MSP, Capt Chris Smith, NI veteran Michael Gallacher and Wing Cdr Shaun Gee, RAF Leuchars, at Edinburgh Castle

Scottish Government makes pledge to the Armed Forces

A UNIFIED approach to ensure the wellbeing of Scotland's Service personnel and veterans has been announced by Veterans Minister Keith Brown. Capt Chris Smith, the Naval Regional Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland, joined Service colleagues for the announcement at Edinburgh Castle.

The Armed Forces Commitments Paper sets out what the Scottish Government is doing to address the health, housing, education and justice needs of current and former Servicemen and women.

Capt Smith said: "The Armed Forces Covenant established by the UK government set out unwavering commitments to our Service community, and I am pleased that the Scottish Government has set out their commitments to meet these obligations. This initiative by the Scottish Government provides reassurance to all Service personnel, both past and present, living in Scotland."

Changes in diving organisation at Excellent

IN APRIL Superintendent of Diving (SofD) and the Diving Standards Team (DST) transferred from Navy Command to form part of the Defence Maritime Regulator (DMR) domain within the newly-formed Defence Safety and Environment Agency (DSEA).

The team's contact numbers and location at the Fleet Diving Headquarters, Horsea Island Portsmouth remain unchanged, although the chain of command and email addresses have been changed in line with the transition.

The DST comprises of Royal Navy, Army and Adventurous Training teams who work for the MOD SofD and are responsible for setting and continuously improving MOD Diving standards policy, conducting audits and providing advice and guidance.

The DMR will hold Duty holders to account for their safety and environmental performance.

Where necessary it will apply sanctions and censures to increasingly senior duty holders, proportionate to the seriousness of any breach or systematic failure of the safety system.

SofD also provides third level assurance of Diving policy through the audit process which is required by the Secretary of State.

The DST also investigates diving accidents and incidents within MOD diving.

The MOD Diving Standards Organisation was originally formed in 2003 following a period of fatal accidents that occurred in MOD diving.

It was decided at that time that responsibilities to provide safety and governance of diving should be separated from the responsibilities for setting capability requirements and operation of diving units.

As a result of this decision the MOD Diving Safety Policy (JSP 375 Leaflet 29) and the Military Diving Safety Management System (MDSMS) (BRd 2806(1)) were formulated.

The Military Diving Safety Management System (MDSMS) is based on a military interpretation of the Diving at Work Regulations 1997 and is detailed in BRd 2806 the UK Military Diving Manual which is recognised by the HSE as the authorised guidance for Military Diving.

Role	Name	Contact
Superintendent of Diving	Cdr Chris Baldwin	DSEA-DMR-DST-SOFD 93832 4143
Diving Standards Officer (Navy)	Lt Cdr Mick Beale	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSO 93832 4140
Diving Standards Officer (Army)	Maj Nick Deppe RE	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSOA 93832 4114
Diving Standards Officer (AT)	Mr Nick Harrington	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSOAT 93832 4137
Diving Standards Inspector (Army)	Capt Glyn Overall RE	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSIA 93832 4029
Diving Standards Inspector (Mixed Gas)	WO1(D) Dave Merridue	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSIMIX 93832 4139
Diving Standards Inspector (Eng)	WO1 (ET)(ME) Ian Williams	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSIENG 93832 4117
Diving Standards Inspector (Air)	CPO(D) YoYo Ravenhall	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSIAIR 93832 4116
Diving Standards Inspector (North)	CPO(D) Jim Slade	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSI(North) 93255 3776 / 6995
Diving Standards Inspector (Army Diving Supervision)	SSGT Pete Donnelly RE	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSIADS 93832 4030
Diving Standards Inspector (Army Support)	Cpl Gaz Lloyd RE	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSI 93832 4030
Diving Standards Inspector (AT)	Mr Marc Botrill	DSEA-DMR-DST-DSIAT 93832 4137

Where to look

DIN 2012 DIN01-210: The Armed Forces Stakeholder Pension Plan
DIN 2012 DIN01-211: Remembrance Day 2012 and the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal
DIN 2012 DIN02-014: Royal Navy Intelligence Symposium November 6 2012, Maritime Warfare School, HMS Collingwood

DIN 2012 DIN02-015: The Defence Manual of Security (JSP 440): Publication of Issue 4.2.0

DIN 2012 DIN03-034: Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Search (&S) Incidents, Accidents or Near Misses (IANM)

DIN 2012 DIN04-142: Future provision of a New Clothing Solution (NCS) service, beyond December 2012
DIN 2012 DIN06-036: Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Introduction of Fee for Intervention (FFI)

DIN 2012 DIN07-145: Exercise Atlantic Adventure 2013 – Exercise Instruction

DIN 2012 DIN08-009: Insurance Brokerage Advice and Assistance

DIN 2012 DIN09-021: Royal Garden Parties 2013 – Civilian Staff

DIN 2012 DIN09-020: NATO Non-Article 5 Medal with clasp OUP-Libya/Libye

DIB 56/12: Government to give civil servants a minimum of ten days' special paid leave a year for Reserves training

DIB 57/12: Eligibility for Service Pupil Premium and increase in funding level for 2013-14

DIB 58/12: MOD launches a new Defence Discount Service

DIB 59/12: Civil Service Reform: Terms and Conditions review

DIN 60/12: Final Agreement on the overall scheme design for the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme

Galaxy 29-2012: British Maritime Doctrine, 4th edition – Promulgation

Galaxy 30-2012: The revised Officers Entry Scheme

Galaxy 31-2012: 2SL Farewell Message

Galaxy 32-2012: The Naval service contribution to the British Military Tournament 2012

Galaxy 33-2012: Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme – Final Agreement

Galaxy 34-2012: Arrest of Royal Marines – anonymity order

RNTM 209/12: Royal Navy Effectiveness Trophies

RNTM 208/12: Royal Naval School Of Aircraft Control (RNSAC) Course And Examination Dates 2013/14

RNTM 207/12: Warfare Branch (General Service) – 2013 Dates for Written Provisional Examinations for Seaman Specialist, Diver, HM and MW Groups

RNTM 206/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 205/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 204/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 203/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 202/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 201/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 200/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 199/12: Dental Valise

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RNTM 172/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 171/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 170/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 169/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 168/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 167/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 166/12: Dental Valise

RNTM 165/12: Dental Valise

The return of the sea daddy

THERE'S no such thing as a new idea. We keep on turning and making new combinations indefinitely.

We're guessing Mark Twain didn't know about sea daddies (or mummies) – that experienced old chief who'd take a young wide-eyed and slightly nervous Jack or Jenny under their wing and introduced them to life in a blue suit.

They've pretty much disappeared from the Navy. Except at HMS Raleigh, where the logistics school has resurrected the mummies and daddies for the 21st Century.

It's just one of a series of minor changes to the way supply chain ratings are being trained. Individually they're minor tweaks. Collectively, they're behind a mini-revolution which has benefitted not just the loggie world, but the wider RN over the past 12 months.

"I can teach people how to be a logistician, but it's much harder to teach someone how to be a sailor," explains WO1 'Mac' McDonald, logistics training officer.

"Joining your first ship or unit is a very daunting experience – more daunting than walking through the gates of Raleigh for the first time."

The budding supply chain specialists who arrive at the school from their ten-week basic training have spent very little, if any, concerted time at sea.

What's it like on a ship? What do we do on board? What's it like outside Raleigh?

All simple – but very pertinent questions. You can teach the mechanics of being a supply chain rating, but it's much harder to teach someone to be a Jack or Jenny. Hence the introduction of

mentoring.

They meet their mentors – logisticians on leading hands courses – courtesy of a 'speed dating' session. For the mentees there's someone to look up to and offer advice; for the mentors there's a first taste of leadership and taking charge of personnel.

"I would have benefitted massively from this experience when I came through here," says HMS Lancaster's LS(SC) George Mukasa – one of the mentors.

"Being able to chat to experienced sailors, especially in an informal setting – I know how these guys feel. It's good to give them some advice, to help them with any nerves. If you have questions, come and speak to us. We'll give guidance."

And it's not merely the youngsters who benefit.

"Even if you're an experienced warrant officer, at times you need someone to turn to. Where can you go?" asks Mac.

The answer is a small team of ex-senior rates and senior NCOs from all three Services employed across Raleigh by training organisation Babcock as mentors, sharing their expertise in many specialist fields – as well as in general terms about life in the Forces.

Experienced loggies, for example, can turn to Taff Chamberlain, Mac's chief when he was a leading hand back in the day. "These guys have seen everything, done everything," says Mac.

Other changes in the jack dusty school include:

■ a replica Type 45 mess deck to replace the traditional rest room;

■ video conferencing replicating what happens on a Type 45 destroyer;

■ leadership exercises on the streets of Plymouth such as an historical 'treasure hunt';

■ logistics 'quizzes' making use of smartboards;

■ sending some newly-qualified supply chain specialists to sea directly, rather than to a stores office on an establishment.

None of the above are revolutionary ideas – but together, says instructor PO 'Das' Boote: "We've seen instant benefits. Results have definitely improved, standards of behaviour are up too."

"Most people who come through here now say it's more professional, more fun, and they see that the pass rate has improved."

The rest area – typically something akin to a sixth form common room in most establishments – has been turned into a replica Type 45 mess, complete with two bunks, uckers board, 'bulkheads' lined with photos of jolly japes, a fridge, tea boat and so on.

The window has been blacked out and more experienced loggies get better seats than their younger counterparts; senior sailors in a 'mess' always get the best seat... such as Fleet Commander Admiral Sir George Zambellas who asked trainees to 'shuffle along' when he visited last month.

It is, says Mac, "my favourite room in the school".

As for smartboards – interactive whiteboards (or blackboards if you're over 40) – are increasingly the standard teaching device in lessons.

"If you put a Powerpoint presentation on, the students will just get bored," CPO(SC) Paul Curry explains. "If schools are using smartboards, we have to

keep up with them."

So instead of 'death by Powerpoint', loggie quizzes.

Another gem is a three-way video conferencing system 'log net' divided between a classroom, the replica storeroom and a mock headquarters or maybe a forward logistics site.

Type 45s already have such facilities on the front line. For trainees, it's an insight into how ensuring the right supplies reach the right destination in good time, dealing with different personalities, different procedures and the occasional obstacles.

"By the time you do it for real, you understand how different organisations work together. That's something which I never had access to when I was going through training," says Paul.

And trainees practising on such systems could find themselves serving in the front-line RN sooner than they think.

"Typically, you would spend your first year after qualifying back on a base," Mac explains.

"What we're doing now is sending some new ABs out to a ship to relieve someone in the supply team who perhaps needs a break."

"I want someone to be able to walk out of here on a Friday and join their first ship on Monday morning. We've given them everything but their sea legs."

"So far we've provided about ten people and it's working. It gives someone who's tired a rest and it gives the ship someone who's brimming with enthusiasm."

Paul adds: "You would not believe how excited the guys are – they want to go to sea. It's inspiring and the whole building is flat when they're not here."

Pensions update

MID-OCTOBER saw the announcement of final agreement on the overall design of the new Armed Forces Pension scheme.

The new scheme will be introduced from April 2015 for all serving personnel, including Reservists who are members of an Armed Forces pension scheme, who are not covered by transitional protection.

The key features of the new scheme remain unchanged from the outline scheme published at the end of July this year, but now include additional choice in how the Early Departure Payment may be taken.

This will normally be taken as a combined monthly income and lump sum, but after listening to the opinions of Service personnel during consultation, the new scheme will allow people to forego the lump sum and convert it to additional monthly income.

For more information, see DIB 2012/60: Final agreement on the overall scheme design for the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme.

Watch out for TwoSix

THE latest edition of *TwoSix.tv* features an NCR/DRI update, Cdr Barrand updating on divisional matters, Surface and Fleet Air Arm PR12 future equipment, the importance of Adventurous Training and the new Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity video.

The DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief to provide an enhanced package for sharing information. If you want to get your message out through these pages or the *TwoSix.tv* DVD, please contact:

■ Pauline Aquilina: 9621 85984

■ WO1 Russ Billings: 93832 5081

Pauline Aquilina is also the first point of contact for the RN Facebook site.



Focus on engineering

ME Branch Update

THERE have over recent months been a number of personnel changes within the ME GS Career Management team.

RCM SO2 MEGS: Lt Cdr Michael Bennett (93832 8799)

RCM WO2 MEGS: WO2 Judge Duery (93832 8800) recently joined from HMS Lancaster and is responsible for all WO2ET(ME) and those remaining legacy MEAs.

RCM MEGS1: CPO George Wynne (93832 8797) who will be relieved in November by CPO Phil Bolton from HMS York. This position is responsible for Petty Officers.

RCM MEGS2: PO Jones (93832 8798) who is responsible for Chief Petty Officers.

OPS. As stated in BR1066, ETs have a max of 48 months from ET2 to achieve OPS. If they do not achieve this, they will mark time at increment level (IL) 4 and should be considered for warning.

LETs have 36 months from CPD to achieve OPS that includes MEOOW2 and a SOC otherwise they should also be considered for warning. BR 2000(2)(3) and (3) (3) are just about to be released.

ABS. The AB population is healthy and the promotion prospects remain very good indeed. All promotion eligibility sifts are conducted in JPA so details must be updated and accurate.

We continue to have more spaces available for promotion to LET than eligible candidates but this situation is improving. We must fill the LH positions so we can in turn fill the PO plot and then strive towards branch sustainability.

WE Branch Update



Drafty's corner

After a few changes in personnel, the WE GS Ratings Career Management Team now consists of:

RCM SO2 WEGS : Lt Cdr Tim Parker (93832 8808)

RCM WO2 WEGS : WO2 Dave Horler (93832 8807) (WO2 CM & LFS Positions)

RCM WEGS1: CPO Paul Jackson (93832 8806) (CPO CM)

RCM WEGS2: CPO Scott Kerr (93832 8805) (PO CM)

In general terms, we are broadly meeting the long term sea commitments and working over a year ahead, and are now assigning individuals to sea positions for Q4 2013.

Looking at the respective plots, the WO2 plot is in balance, with an even split between sea and shore posts and sufficient numbers to meet demands, although the relatively small size of the plot does mean that it is disproportionately susceptible to unpredictable changes.

The CPO plot remains healthy, bolstered by an ongoing input from legacy Artificers advancing to CPO on passing their PQE.

The PO plot remains under strength as the ET pipeline builds and numbers reduce with legacy rights.

This is expected to improve in Q3/Q4 2014 as LETs recently selected for promotion complete POETQC during 2013 and are available for their first sea assignments.

In the short term, at least until mid-2014, there will continue to be a requirement to use CPOs to fill Section Head positions at sea and whilst every attempt will be made to minimise this, there will be circumstances where this will be the most effective way to deliver SQEP to the front line.

Extended Careers will continue to be offered, driven partly by the need to retain experience and partly by the high numbers of personnel naturally terminating between now and 2015.

Similarly, Extensions of Service continue to be a valid option to retain individuals in specific positions and interested, eligible personnel are encouraged to discuss options with their respective Career Managers and Line Managers.

Certain categories of maintainer are currently in short supply, most notably SWMLU, and whilst these groups are being actively managed to address the shortfalls, the situation is not predicted to improve until 2014.

Of equal concern, finding replacements for medical downgrades or notice givers is challenging, with low numbers in the ERP and few personnel ashore after MTA, resulting in temporary or permanent short notice reliefs

usually being trawled from lower priority units.

On a brighter note, promotion numbers have been healthy and are expected to remain in the future and there are new opportunities for people to join the QEC in build or within the growing Cyber domain.

And finally, personnel are reminded to ensure that their personal information in JPA remains up to date and to take advantage of the benefits of Professional Registration as outlined in CNEO's recent letter below.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Professional registration of RN Technicians

It has now been over seven years since the introduction of the Air Engineering Technician and Engineering Technician and the concept is now embedded firmly as the core foundation of the Engineering Branch.

With SDSR and redundancy now behind us, the future for Naval engineers and technicians is bright and the emphasis has now shifted to recruitment, retention and the development of ethos and professionalism.

Engineering Technicians now represent 30 per cent of the Naval Service and this is forecast to grow further in the future in order to support the next generation of ships, submarines and aircraft.

This reflects trends across the rest of UK society, where there is a growing recognition of the value and importance of technicians, especially since there is a forecasted need for the country to grow an additional 450,000 technicians by 2020.

The newly formed Technician Council has recently launched the 'Professional Technician' programme

aimed at raising the profile of technicians in the UK, increasing the pool of home grown technical skills and encouraging greater professionalism.

The MOD has played a leading role in the development of the Professional Technician; recognition of the quality of our training and our people, but we need to continue to show leadership as we move forward.

On this theme, I would like to highlight the growing importance getting the RN's technicians, be they AE, SM or GS, professionally registered.

The RN has special agreements in place with the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) and the Society of Operations Engineers (SOE), enabling you to register as an EngTech from Leading Hand or as an IEng from Chief Petty Officer.



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A group of men in formal uniforms, likely military or naval, are standing in a grand hall. They are holding a large flag, possibly the Union Jack, which is being presented or displayed. The hall has a high ceiling with a checkered pattern and large windows in the background. The floor is polished and reflects the light. The scene is formal and ceremonial.

– Colin, Jean and Andrew Rigby

where he was when Lady Shirley was sunk on her next patrol and lost with all hands. 1944 he survived when the anti-submarine whaler Southern Pride was grounded and lost off Freetown, Sierra Leone. He completed his active service in 1946 having served in four vessels that sank and one that was crippled. Post war he continued in the RNVR and supplementary reserve and upon amalgamation in the RNR retired at

John Grant. CPO. Served 1945-69 passing the Artificer Apprentice entry examination at aged 15 he joined Daedalus 3 (Bedhampton) for induction and after advanced engineering training at Condor was promoted to Aircraft Artificer 5th class (1948); he worked on piston-engined aircraft at RNAS Culdrose (1949) and obtained his PO rate. Also served at RN Air Stations Stretton (1952), Lossiemouth (1953), Ford

Tom Harry Fox. Signaller. Served 1948-51 at Royal Arthur, Drake, Defiance and in Wizard. A founder member of HMS

July 2013.
Lt Cdr S E Yates to be CO of MCM2
Crews, Portsmouth from January 11 2013.

www.navynews.co.uk

Operational honours

The full list of operational honours for personnel in the Naval service, which recognises service on operations in Afghanistan and national operations for the period October 1 2011 to March 31 2012, is below.

- AFGHANISTAN
Office of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)
Col Gwyn Jenkins MBE, Royal Marines
Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)
Maj Huw Lloyd Morgan, Royal Marines
Military Cross (MC)
Acting Sgt Christopher Terrence Downey, Royal Marines
Cpl Hamish Robertson Hame Renton, Royal Marines
Mention in Despatches (MiD)
Acting Cpl Christopher Raymond Casey, Royal Marines
- Maj Simon Milward Rogers, Royal Marines
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)
Lt Cdr Jonathan Steven Collacott, Royal Navy
- REST OF THE WORLD
Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)
Capt Shaun Peter Jones, Royal Fleet Auxiliary
Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)
Lt Cdr Philip Edward Dennis, Royal Navy
CSgt Ruairi Dwyer, Royal Marines
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)
Capt Nils Thomas Dingwall, Royal Marines
Maj Adam Thomas Whitmarsh, Royal Marines
- MISCELLANEOUS
Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB)
Petty Officer Graeme Dickson, Royal Navy

1972 1982 1992 2002
THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES
We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



Feline felicitations: congratulations to Thomas C Crusher for the second GCB in 1992

November 1972

AFTER her first year as an electrical fitter apprentice on the Chatham Naval Base, 18-year-old Zandra Bradley was selected to become a technician apprentice for specialist training in the new professorial and technological class. As one of the first female crafting apprentices in Naval service, she spoke about what it was like entering a 'man's world'. "Stick up for yourself," was her advice to other women, "I was a bit shy at first, but not any more."

November 1982

PARADES in London, Portsmouth and Plymouth allowed the public to pay a warm-hearted tribute to the members of the Falklands Task Force. Some 1,250 veterans, many from the Royal Navy, were greeted by cheering crowds of 300,000, and an impressive fly-past of eight helicopters and two Sea Harriers. Margaret Thatcher called the victory, "one of the most brilliant military achievements of modern times. We owe that triumph to the best, the bravest and the most professional armed services in the world."

In his speech, the Lord Mayor of London told the veterans: "You have given this country a new confidence. You represent what is best in Britain."

November 1992

THOMAS C Crusher the cat was awarded his second GCB (Good Cat Badge) for effectively handling the rodent population at the Royal Naval Patrol Headquarters in Devonport, where he had been the resident mouser since 1986.

This award was presented by Captain HMS Drake, Capt Mike Thomas, with the assistance of LWREG Julie Ellison.

November 2002

A HISTORIC collection relating to Admiral Horatio Nelson was sold in London on Trafalgar Day for an impressive £2,130,029, tripling the pre-sale estimates.

This, at the time, was thought to be the last collection of Nelson's possessions that would ever be sold. Originally belonging to Alexander Davidson, Nelson's friend, treasurer and closest advisor, this collection remained unknown for almost 200 years.

Among the treasures were an Egyptian club sword; a diamond brooch in the shape of an anchor, engraved with the initials 'HR' and thought to be a personal gift to Lady Hamilton; the bloodstained purse that Nelson carried on the day of the battle of Trafalgar, containing the 21 gold coins Nelson had placed inside on the morning of his death.

A large number of revealing letters written to Davidson by Lady Nelson were bought by the National Maritime Museum for £136,650, and a single letter from Emma Hamilton, lamenting Nelson's passing, sold for £31,076.

Trophy lives



WHEN a ten-gun brig-sloop was launched at Woolwich Dockyard on May 11 1820 it is probably true to say that, without ever seeing active service, this vessel was to become one of the best known names in the Royal Navy.

Measuring only 90ft 4in in length and 24ft 6in in the beam, she displaced a mere 235 tons, cost no more than £7,803 – and she was named HMS Beagle.

Two months after her launch she achieved a small degree of fame by being the first ship to sail under the (then new) London Bridge, at the fleet review for the coronation of King George IV.

Following conversion to a survey ship in 1825 her first voyage in this role, under the command of Capt Parker King, was to Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, at the very southern end of the South American continent.

Her work included a detailed survey of a channel running east-west through the Tierra del Fuego archipelago, the channel being some 150 miles long and between three and eight miles wide.

The islands straddled the border between Chile and Argentina – the (perhaps inevitable) territorial dispute between the two countries not being finally resolved until 1985.

The surveyed channel was entitled the Beagle Channel and the ship returned eventually to Plymouth in 1830.

In December 1831 Beagle sailed again for South America, this time under Capt Robert FitzRoy who wanted an expert in geology onboard for the voyage.

A young naturalist by the name of Charles Darwin joined the ship and, by the time Beagle returned to England – via Tahiti and Australia – in October 1836 he had made his name as a geologist and fossil collector.

Additionally his journal, commonly referred to as *The Voyage of the Beagle*, earned him respect as a writer.

While the ship spent much of her time in oceanographic surveying, Darwin used almost three and a quarter years of the time away for exploration on land; one of his most remarkable discoveries was at Punta Alta, on the Atlantic coast of Argentina.

Here he made a major find of gigantic fossils of extinct mammals, hitherto known from only a very few specimens.

On the return leg of the voyage the ship called at the Galapagos Islands, off the north-west coast of South America.

Here Darwin found plants, reptiles and birds which had developed in isolation from both those on the mainland and those on almost identical nearby islands – this he ascribed to the various species having undergone gradual, independent transformation.

He collected and made detailed observations of plants and animals, the results convincing him that all species of life had descended, over time, from a common ancestry.

As a result he was able to propose the scientific theory that this branching evolutionary pattern resulted from a process he called "natural selection".

On November 24 1859 – 153 years ago this month – his book *On the Origin of Species* was published which contained much evidence in support of his theory of evolution by natural selection.

Perhaps inevitably his work was not accepted immediately by all – nonetheless by the early 1870s the scientific community and much of the general public had accepted his explanation of evolution as a fact.

In April 1837 Beagle sailed for Australia on her third voyage of research and surveying, finally returning to England in 1843; thereafter she was transferred to the Coastguard Service and not finally broken up until 1870.

Her name lives on in the wild waters of the channel through Tierra del Fuego, and will always be linked with that of Charles Darwin.

Her work in the more southerly oceans is recalled by **Trophy 22051**; this reproduction of a painting by John Chancellor shows Beagle off James Island in the Galapagos at 1415 on October 17 1835.

The ship is shown lowering her whaler in preparation for recovering Darwin and the shore surveying party; careful study of the ship's surviving logs allowed the artist to depict Beagle in exactly the correct position relative to James Island and on the correct, precise heading.

This print was presented to the most recent HMS Beagle – also a survey vessel – by the Alexander gallery, of Bristol, in 1983.

Talking Navy News goes digital

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in December's Noticeboard must be received by **November 12**

Reunions

- NOVEMBER 2012
Ton Class Association: Pre-Christmas Lunch. Bucks-Berks area invite members nationally to join us. Venue will be in the Maidenhead area on November 24. Contact Edward Freathy (Edderton M1111, 1956) at edwardfreathy@btinternet.com or tel: 01628 523711.
- JANUARY 2013
Midway Towns Submariners Association: Memorial service for all those who lost their lives when the submarine Truculent was sunk following a collision at sea on January 12, 1950. The service will be held on January 12 at St Georges Centre, Chatham, Kent on the university campus which is situated at the bottom of Dock Road, Chatham (used to be HMS Pembroke). The service will start at 1050 hrs and will be followed by a buffet/tot/wine etc. All are very welcome. Any questions please contact Derek Grant at d.grant384@btinternet.com or tel: 01634 717384 or Archie Watt at archie.watt@connectfree.co.uk or tel: 01634 710715.
- MARCH 2013
Minewarfare Reunion: This will be held at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth on March 16. Serving and ex Minewarfare Branch members most welcome. Full details of the event are available at www.mwassociation.co.uk Tickets are £35 for Minewarfare Association Members, £40 for non-members/guests. Contact Taff Reader at fost-mpv-mwotc-man@nrta.mod.uk or tel: 01329 333471 or Dixie Dean at Dean370@mod.uk or tel: 01329 332290.

Ask Jack

Frederick Gordon Halford, Portsmouth Division, HMS St George (Isle of Man) 1940: Joined HMS Valiant as a Boy 1st class and whilst in the Eastern Mediterranean June/July, as the youngest on board (by just a few days), I was picked by BBC Forces Network to send a free message home; left as Ord Seaman. At the end of 1943 I joined HMS Fitzroy (in build at Boston shipyard in the US) and was an AB seaman ST (part of depth charge crews); Fitzroy was later berthed in Belfast with other frigates, all built in the USA. If anyone remembers serving with me or can remember these ships in Belfast I would love to hear from you. Tel: 01933 355721.

HMS Arethusa: The Leander-class frigate was launched in 1963 and commissioned

into the Royal Navy in November 1965, was the last warship to be built on the Isle of Wight, in the shipyard of JS White & Sons. The ship was on active service from 1965 to 1989, when she finally paid off. HMS Arethusa Association was formed in 1987 from a meeting of former ship's personnel. In the year 2015, it is proposed to hold a grand reunion on the Isle of Wight for all who served in this ship, to commemorate 50 years since first commissioning and 27th Annual reunion of the Association. To coincide with this anniversary it is also proposed to produce a magazine on the history of the vessel from 1965 to 89 and I am asking for any stories, photographs, mementos, dates and places of visits etc., to be sent to me for inclusion in this publication. Contact Tom Sawyer, Honorary Secretary at mail@hmsf38arethusa.plus.com or write to 6 Sycamore Close, Slingsby, York YO62 4BG, North Yorkshire.

Swap drafts

- LLOGS CS(P) Scott Furber. Currently onboard HMS Diamond is looking for any Plymouth based ship or Plymouth shore establishment. 273-LLOGSCH4@a.dii.mod.uk
- LET(WE) Clayton. Ordnance section. Currently onboard HMS Diamond would like to swap to any fishery protection vessel or small ship from December 2012. 273-W34@a.dii.mod.uk
- LOGS Chef 'Robbie' Roberts. Currently onboard HMS Diamond is looking to swap for any ship or establishment in Plymouth or surrounding area. 273-LOGSCH5@a.dii.mod.uk

Sports lottery

- September 22: £5,000 – AB1 C Johnson; £1,500 – AB1 K Price; £500 – Marine G Whyte.
- September 29: £5,000 – Lt J C Burrows; £1,500 – Lt R D Nash; £500 – AB1 M Rodriguez Martinez.
- October 6: £5,000 – PO S J Dash; £1,500 – CPO K Hodgson; £500 – Maj S D Orr.
- October 13: £5,000 – ET(ME) J D James; £1,500 – AB1 S G Barnard; £500 – AB1 R Cherrie.

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
- Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.
- There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
- Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
- The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.
- Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

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MPs see officer training

FOUR members of the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme made a fact-finding visit to Britannia Royal Naval College.

The MPs, Jake Berry (Rossendale and Darwen), Sheryll Murray (South East Cornwall) and Sarah Newton (Truro and Falmouth), together with Ashley Fox, MEP (South West of England and Gibraltar), were given an insight into the training the college provides to Royal Navy Officer Cadets.

Highlights of the visit included the chance to watch the Officer Cadets taking part in an exercise in the Dartmouth Maritime Training area.

Using small boats and other training craft, the exercise is based on a disaster relief scenario, with the cadets required to bring humanitarian aid to a community.

With insurgents operating in the area, the cadets must also be on the look-out for enemy attacks and maintain security throughout.

Captain Jerry Kyd, the CO of Dartmouth, said: "The training provided at BRNC is as realistic as we can possibly make it to ensure that when the cadets leave the college they are well-equipped with the skills they need to play their part in current and future operations.

"I hope also that the visitors have got a feel for the quality of our people, their commitment and determination to succeed.

"It is our Servicemen and women who remain key to the success of the Royal Navy."

During their time at BRNC members of the scheme were also shown the facilities used to train cadets who have chosen to specialise as Warfare Officers.

The visitors were given a tour of BRNC's state-of-the-art ship's bridge simulator, which is primarily used to teach navigation and bridgeman ship.

Images outside of the 'windows' of the bridge can represent open sea or harbours and coastlines from around the world. It can be configured for any class of RN ship or submarine.

At the click of a button changes can be made to simulate different environmental conditions, such as sea states and winds, and bring into play other vessels or objects.

The Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme was established 24 years ago by Sir Neil Thorne and was designed to develop politicians' understanding of UK military capability.

Members spend a minimum of 21 days, over a 12 month period, visiting units covering the whole spectrum of Service activity.

Dickens of a festival

THE annual Victorian Festival of Christmas at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard normally has a Dickensian feel to it.

This year's Festival will have particular cause to build on the Dickensian-style entertainment as 2012 marks the 200th anniversary of the great author's birth in the city.

Charles Dickens' father, John, helped manage the Naval Pay Office, which is just inside the Victory Gate entrance to the Dockyard.

The festival runs from 10am to 6pm from Friday November 30 to Sunday December 2, and tickets on the gate cost £16 for adults, £14 for children, £15 for seniors and £49 for a family.

For that, the organisers of the festival promise a wealth of entertainment and attractions, from snow-covered streets and a Victorian Father Christmas to the largest Christmas market on the South Coast, as well as a wide range of food and drinks, whether it be mulled wine and roasted chestnuts from street vendors or a swift pint in the Lord Nelson pub.

For more details see www.christmasfestival.co.uk

Mystery over 'GDI' A-bomb

IN January 1952 I was given a pier head jump to join HMS Narvik in Birkenhead, *writes Lt Cdr Stewart Hett RN (retd)*.

It was a surprise to find myself in a Landing Ship Tank, a ship that was destined for a special operation, but no one knew where we were going or what our job would be when we got there.

I found myself as the Navigation Officer; Justice Hawkins, an old shipmate from HMS Amethyst, was a member of the ship's company.

I was sent to Portsmouth for a diving course, along with Justice.

This was in the days of the old-style oxygen breathing gear and diving suits that almost prevented one from moving.

We spent a week sitting on the bottom of Horsea Lake, with snow on the ground, armed with a hammer and cold chisel and invited to hammer through a link of cable – cold, wet and hard work!

Narvik moved to Portsmouth and then Southampton, where we embarked Army equipment including bulldozers and cranes.

By this time some of us knew what our mission was, and as we prepared to sail the *Portsmouth Evening News* had headlines: 'Naval Force Sails for the First British Atomic Bomb Trial' – the cat was out of the bag.

The force comprised two LSTs, Zeebrugge and Narvik, in the advance party, to be followed by a third LST, Tracker, and the target ship, Plym. Later the 'Woolworth carrier' Campania would join us.

An LST makes hard work of an ocean passage – with a head wind and heavy sea, progress is very slow; sometimes a day's passage was barely discernible on the chart.

Rough seas caused the bulldozers to start moving on the tank deck, and it was a major evolution to tighten the securing chains without getting crushed.

We had embarked a vast amount of stores for use at the test site, including NAAFI items and beer.

During loading, it became clear there would not be sufficient room in our store rooms for all of the attractive store, so some had to be loaded into the tank deck. Not a secure stowage – need I say more?

We reached Fremantle, West Australia, then set sail for the Monte Bello Islands, an uninhabited group amongst coral

I SERVED as Navigation Officer on board HMS Narvik during the first British atomic bomb test in the Monte Bello Islands, and was interested to read the article *HMS Atomic Bomb* in the October edition, *writes Stewart Hett*.

A few weeks before the explosion I was in a boat sent into the lagoon to meet a Sunderland aircraft, which I was told was making a test run before actually bringing the atomic bomb to the islands (*see below*).

I have always assumed that we collected parts of the actual bomb, and the 'test run' was just a reefs off North West Australia.

The atom bomb would be exploded in HMS Plym, moored close to one of the large islands.

All the LSTs had Landing Craft Assault (LCAs) embarked at davits and Narvik also carried Landing Craft Mechanical (LCMs), manned by Royal Marines.

It was a major evolution to lower the LCMs into the water using Narvik's heavy lift derrick that could only plumb one craft at a time.

The next craft to be unloaded had to be jacked up, a trolley on rails moved underneath and the craft transported under the derrick.

The Army's job was to set up instrument sites round the target area and a major control and camera position.

They moved to tented camps ashore and their equipment and support was provided by the landing craft.

Once the Army and their stores had been landed, the Navy provided a hotel and boat service for them, which meant there were plenty of opportunities for swimming parties, banyans and even camping weekends.

Fishing from the quarterdeck and from boats was a great sport.

We carried a NAAFI Area Manager on board, and NAAFI set up a canteen beside one of the lagoons, which was netted in so it was shark-free for swimming.

As the ship's Navigation Officer, one of my jobs was to survey boat channels through the coral, which might be needed to recover the scientists after the bomb went off.

We had boats fitted with echo sounders, but I was soon able to judge the depth of the shallow water by eye.

We had to lay underwater cable to link up all the instrument sites.

One of the LCMs had been fitted with cable-laying gear, and the longest lay involved about three miles of cable from the explosion site to the main recording position.

This cable on its drum was very heavy, and once it started paying out, we found that the braking system was unable to stop or slow the reel.

I was navigating the LCM, and if we made a mistake in the route the cable would run out before we reached dry land.

We drove steadily on hoping no one would be injured by the unstoppable drum. We made it...

For the first months, with just Zeebrugge, Narvik and the Army on site we had a very free and easy life – very enjoyable for those who did not miss the bright lights.

The Australian Navy had loaned us a refrigerator lighter and an MFV, manned by RAN, which shuttled to the tiny port of Onslow to collect mail and stores.

Eventually the other ships arrived, and with Admiral Torlesse in Campania life became more formal.

HMS Plym was moored in the centre of the lagoon.

Then the bomb arrived, though its arrival was shrouded in mystery.

I went in a boat to meet an RAF Sunderland – I was told this was a dummy run to deliver the bomb, and we unloaded various packages that we took to Plym.

As this trip was never repeated I assume I was actually transporting the bomb to the target ship.

As the day of the explosion arrived, ships moved out of the lagoon and remained at sea under way.

The big day dawned, and those who were not on watch were allowed to witness the explosion. We had to face away from the target area and close our eyes.

We were ten miles away; even facing away with eyes closed, I could still see the flash through my eyelids.

cover story – it is unlikely that an aircraft would be flown to Australia simply to carry out a test run.

Many years later I was talking to an RAF man who had served in Sunderland squadrons; he said he knew of this Sunderland flight and the fact that the aircrew were very wary of the radiation risk that was involved in the flight.

I very much doubt if Plym carried more than the bomb casing on their passage to the islands.

A full account of his time in the islands was written for an association newsletter; a version of this is printed here.

After ten seconds we looked round and could see the mushroom of cloud rising into the sky.

It was not the traditional mushroom shape – the plume trailed off first one way then another as carried by the upper air, so that it looked rather like a brown inverted Z.

As soon as the bomb had exploded the monitoring began.

Our motorboats were fitted with canopies that covered the whole of the boat, and the crew wore protective clothing and moved in toward the site of the explosions with Geiger counters going full blast.

Helicopters flew from Campania and moved towards the mushroom cloud, and we anchored off the islands whilst the scientists continued their tests.

There was no fishing or swimming because the water might be radioactive.

I was part of the survey party investigating the crater, and HMS Tracker became a scientific and decontamination ship.

We first dressed up in protective clothing, then took our boat into the crater and carried out the survey – it is difficult to take sextant angles wearing protective headgear and masks!

On completion we returned to Tracker for decontamination.

We stripped off, showered and were then checked all over with Geiger counters before being allowed to dress. Any radioactive reading meant a rescrub.

As junior member of the survey team I was detailed to revisit the site to remove the survey marks.

I had to get dressed again in protective clothing and go in to the crater area, landing on the beach.

On the way in I noticed a pinnacle in the middle which we had not recorded, so back we had to go to repeat the survey.

On land there was no sign of Plym. The largest bits were about 2ft – all that remained of a frigate...

For me it was a fascinating year.

Navigating an LST, which scarcely moved through the water when wind and sea was against her.

Diving in the snow of UK and amongst the sharks, sea snakes and coral.

Heavy seamanship, loading and unloading LCTs.

Life on a desert island, visiting the bright lights of Western Australia.

And, of course, being the first to witness a British atom bomb explosion.

We all wore radiation badges, and my pay book records that I received 0.004 of a Roentgen during my Monte Bello time.

Why have I called this story the GDI? We called the Monte Bello Islands our God Damned Islands...



Futtocks unveiled at museum

THE National Museum of the Royal Navy has launched a range of merchandise which breathe new life into old nautical terms.

The range, which includes t-shirts, mugs and pens, are said to give a modern twist to words which have fallen out of use.

And the first design sees such lines as 'Get off your futtocks and make me a cuppa' and 'Have you ever seen such a magnificent pair of futtocks?'

Futtocks, as any old salt will know, are the curved pieces of timber which form the lower part of a wooden ship's frame.

The term is believed to be a corruption of foot-hooks, which demonstrates the importance of the pieces in the structure of the hull.

Other words being considered include:

- ☛ Loblolly – a thick gruel or porridge;
- ☛ Trunnions – the projecting pins which often act as a pivot, as seen on the sides of the barrels of cannon and mortars;
- ☛ Garfangle – said to be a type of spear used to catch eels.

NMRM Enterprise Manager Giles Gould said: "With the development of modern materials and technological advances, many pieces of equipment, forms of construction and tools that were once used on ships have been replaced, their names forgotten.

"With the development of this line of merchandise we are hoping to bring some of these names back into fashion and give them a bit of a modern twist.

"We are constantly striving to present the history and heritage of the Royal Navy in a way that will entertain and inform our visitors.

"We believe that this line of merchandise will appeal to people whilst reviving historical terms that have fallen out of use."

Merchandise is available in the gift shop at the Museum, or online at www.rnmuseumshop.co.uk

Mary Rose raising recalled

THE 30th anniversary of the raising of the Mary Rose from the Solent was marked by a special boat trip to the site of the wreck and a talk in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Millions of people watched live pictures of the wreck of King Henry VIII's warship being lifted from the sea bed on October 11 1982.

And 30 years later to the day, a chartered boat stopped at the spot and the Purbrook Archers carried out a ceremonial longbow salute.

☛ Work is continuing to finish the new Mary Rose Museum in time for an official opening early next year – see next month's *Navy News* for an interview with the Chief Executive of the Mary Rose Trust, Rear Admiral John Lippitt.

Frontline medicine

A NEW free exhibition at the Imperial War Museum North explores the role of medicine and medics on the front line.

Ranging back as far as World War 1, and as recently as the conflict in Afghanistan, the Manchester museum uses words and objects from people involved at the sharp end to convey remarkable stories from British Servicemen and women around the world.

Entering the exhibition – *Saving Lives: Frontline Medicine in a Century of Conflict* – through a life-sized recreation of the rear

of a Chinook, widely used to evacuate casualties from battle in Afghanistan, the exhibition includes dramatic footage, audio and specially-commissioned filmed interviews with medics and casualties.

The displays also demonstrate how significant advances in general medicine, such as x-rays and plastic surgery, were pioneered and refined in times of conflict.

For more details of the exhibition, which runs until September 2013, see www.iwm.org.uk

The vision at RHS

THE new headmaster of Royal Hospital School, James Lockwood, outlines his vision for children's education:

"There is nothing more important than the education of children and young people and, probably more than any other school of its type, the Royal Hospital School recognises the truth of the great Chartist slogan that 'education is a liberating force'.

"As Headmaster, it is my aim to unlock the potential of each individual by offering them a whole new world of life-changing opportunities and an environment in which academic excellence is promoted through learning and shared experiences.

"A place that encourages boys and girls to discover themselves; quite simply, to develop a passion that will endure for the rest of their lives. Through passion comes purpose, and from purpose the journey ahead becomes clear.

"School experience should be a happy one, founded not on learning alone, but on relationships formed and values shared.

"I firmly believe that a well-balanced individual needs a sense of spiritual awareness, along with academic and sporting achievements and I place great store by the values of kindness, service, generosity of spirit, and integrity; these are the invisible strands that hold a community such as ours together.

"By working together, the staff at the Royal Hospital School ensure that our pupils are able to form strong relationships and make a valuable contribution both here at school and in the adult world, in which many will become



● RHS Headmaster, James Lockwood

leaders in their chosen field.

"With a commitment to leadership, service and an international outlook at the heart of the school's values, it is my goal that the Royal Hospital School becomes the first choice for parents seeking an outstanding all-round, balanced, broad and full education for their children.

"To fulfil this mission I aim to ensure academic and pastoral excellence, maintain breadth and challenge, inspire individual and social responsibility and develop the life skills that will prepare our students to meet the future with confidence.

"In short, my intention is to produce happy, rounded, grounded young people who live balanced and full lives."

For more information www.royalhospitalschool.org or contact Admissions on 01473 326136 or admissions@royalhospitalschool.org

Service Premium extended to cover more children

The MOD has announced that the Government is extending the scheme which provides financial support for the children of Armed Forces personnel.

The Service Pupil Premium is part of the Government's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.

Children of military personnel who have died in service will now be eligible to access the Premium, and children of military personnel will continue to qualify after their parents have left the Armed Forces, up to a maximum of six years.

Also, the amount paid to schools for each eligible child under the Premium will increase from £250 this year to £300 in 2013-14.

The Service Pupil Premium was introduced by the Department for Education for state-maintained schools in England as part of the commitment to delivering the Armed Forces Covenant. The Premium enables schools to provide extra, mainly pastoral, support for children with parents in the Armed Forces.

These children are not underachieving compared to their peers but the Premium is provided in recognition of the additional support schools often need to provide for these children.

Further information can be found in Defence Internal Brief: DIB 2012/57: Service Premium extended to cover almost 6,000 more children this year and Premium increased for 2013-14.

Schools to remember World War 1

THE Government has announced a new flagship scheme to commemorate the 100th anniversary of World War 1 and give thousands of schoolchildren the opportunity to visit the Great War battlefields.

Pupils and teachers from every maintained secondary school in England will have the chance to go on a tour of the great battlefields – such as the Somme, Verdun and Fromelles – and take part in remembrance ceremonies on

the western front.

WW1 study is already compulsory for children aged 11 to 14. This project will allow pupils to learn at first-hand about the sacrifices made by the troops and the personal stories of those involved in the war effort.

Prime Minister David Cameron made the announcement as he set out the Government's plans to mark the centenary of the start of WW1 in 2014.

Trinity student wins award

CADET PO Rory Bascombe, who studies in Year 11, has been awarded Trinity Governors' commendation for his recent success, winning the Naval Members Cup in the National Regatta of the Combined Cadet Force HQ at HMS Bristol.

He competed in the Gold fleet, of the Pico class, against fierce competition from CCF contingents from a number of schools in the UK.

During the summer he participated in many naval

activities whilst attending the Britannia Royal Naval College summer camp with other Trinity students.

Situated between Exeter and Torquay and enjoying stunning sea views of Lyme Bay and a beautiful stretch of the South West England coastline, Trinity School is an English independent, co-educational Day and Boarding School for children from the age of three months in our Nursery through to Sixth Form years.

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Alternatively contact:

The RAN Lateral Recruitment Team at:
RAN.OverseasRecruiting@defence.gov.au
 or your local resettlement officer.



Royal reception for Games crew

PERSONNEL from across the Naval Service who were involved in the Olympics and Paralympics were invited to a reception at Clarence House in London by the Prince of Wales.

Led by Lt Simon Shaw, the Commanding Officer of HMS Exploit, sailors and Marines from Exploit, Bulwark, Ocean and 539 Assault Squadron RM attended the Olympics-themed event.

There they were joined by 'gamesmakers' – the volunteers in the purple LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) uniform – judges, officials, actors and actresses from the Olympics opening and closing ceremonies and other members of the Armed Forces at the Prince's home on the Mall.

"The reception was a unique opportunity for us to meet the Prince of Wales, brief him on our participation in the successful Olympics, and also to rub shoulders with the gamesmakers and actors from the opening ceremony," said Lt Smith.

"The Prince was particularly interested in the contribution of the seven P2000 patrol ships to the security operation, whilst also discussing the role of HMS Ocean on the Thames."

The sailors, soldiers and airmen involved in Operation Olympic Guardian mixed with the civilian volunteers, telling stories and exchanging details of their particular roles and responsibilities during the Olympics and Paralympics.

Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall moved between the various groups, listening to the perspectives of Servicemen and

women and civilians.

"Everyone invited enjoyed themselves and were proud to have served in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, whether on patrol at sea off Weymouth, searching bags in the Olympic Park or providing bespoke tasks like meteorological support to

the embarked air group in HMS Ocean," said Lt Smith.

Exploit, along with sister Archer-class patrol boats Tracker, Raider, Smiter, Puncher, Blazer and Express, were deployed to Weymouth and the Thames for patrol duties for the duration of the two Games.

Dartmouth staff to the rescue

RIVER staff at Britannia Royal Naval College have been praised for going to the aid of a mariner whose boat engine failed off the Mewstone, an uninhabited rock off Wembury close to Plymouth Sound.

WO Arty Shaw, AB Rebecca East and civilian worker Phil Orton were returning to Dartmouth after collecting one of the College picket boats from a shipyard in South East Cornwall when they came across a rigid inflatable boat, owned by Paul Thomas, drifting towards the open channel.

Playing the fuel

A SIMULATED fuel depot emergency was scheduled to be played out at Torpoint as *Navy News* went to press.

The exercise scenario involved a fuel release at the Thanckes oil fuel depot, run by the Oil and Pipelines Agency, which refuels Royal Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and other vessels.

As part of the exercise Thanckes and Cornwall County Council were planning to test the Informer Emergency Notification System service, and lessons learned will be incorporated into future plans.

WO Shaw said: "We saw Mr Thomas waving to us and went to his assistance."

"He told us that his engine had failed so we agreed to tow him back to a safe mooring within Plymouth breakwater, from where he had arranged for a friend to collect him."

"Providing this type of assistance is routine business for the Royal Navy and it's covered in the training we provide to the Officer cadets at BRNC."

"We were glad to be in a position to help Mr Thomas on this occasion."

After securing Mr Thomas's boat to a buoy and informing the Royal Navy Port Control of their actions, the BRNC crew continued on their way.

Mr Thomas, who lives near Plymouth, said: "The crew of the BRNC boat were extremely helpful."

"They couldn't have been more friendly and did everything possible to make sure I was secure."

"I can't thank them enough for their assistance."

"I know they were under a bit of pressure to return to BRNC, but they came to my aid and did what they had to do with good grace."

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Exchange group visits RN graves

EACH summer a number of Sea Cadets travel overseas, and those going to Canada visit and train aboard HMCS Quadra, the Canadian Cadet Summer Training Centre at Goose Spit, Comox, British Columbia.

This year, to learn about local aspects of their naval heritage, the five British Sea Cadets and one Royal Marine Cadet visited the churchyard of St Peter's Anglican Church, Comox, to find details of five Royal Navy graves.

Along with their escort officer, Lt Cdr (SCC) W Alan Thomas RNR of Neath, and local members of the Comox Valley Branch of the Royal Canadian Naval Association, the cadets spent time hearing about the four Royal Navy sailors and one Royal Marine buried in Comox.

These British Servicemen died while on active duty from 1896 to 1910, the year the Royal Canadian Navy was created.

The Royal Navy was very prominent along the west coast of Canada during the years before and for many years after the province of British Columbia joined the Canadian Confederation in 1871.

The cadets placed poppies and White Ensign flags on the graves, and a short memorial service was conducted.

As part of the 32-strong international Sea Cadet exchange, the British cadets enjoyed various activities within the Comox Valley and aboard Quadra.

The visitors also spent time in Victoria and Vancouver before returning home.

The Comox Valley branch of the RCNA helps maintain the five graves, and an information sign arranged by the Comox Archives and Museum Society near the graves provides details about their lives and service.



● Two members of the 1st Avoch Sea Scouts get to grips with some ropework on board SD Omagh

Sea Scouts get some sea time

WHEN the 1st Avoch Sea Scouts were told they were going to visit Clyde Naval base midway through their activity week at Lochgoilhead Scout Centre, they had no idea what to expect.

And it wasn't the only new 'activity' sprung on them during their camp.

The Sea Scouts were also given time on board the Serco Clyde Fleet Tenders SDs Oronsay and Omagh.

The Sea Scouts (aged 11-14) and Explorer Sea Scouts (14-18) swiftly put their seamanship skills to the test and formed a bridge crew to handle navigation, helm, lookout and Officer of the Watch duties with visits to Rothesay, Helensburgh and Greenock around the Firth of Clyde.

The skipper of the Oronsay was so impressed with their skills

Cadets to lead funds initiative

CASH has been pouring in for the Sea Cadet Corps' new sail training ship – but now the focus for fundraising is switching to the cadets themselves.

The project to raise £5.6 million to replace tall ship TS Royalist was officially launched at the end of 2009, and to date the corporate initiative by the Appeal Group has netted £3.8 million.

The first major milestone is to reach the £4.5 million mark, at which point the tender for the new ship – which will be similar in size to Royalist – can be issued.

And on Trafalgar Day, the Corps' 400 units were challenged

to contribute £250,000 to the total – no mean feat when every unit is already raising funds to keep themselves afloat.

Leading the way will be the management team and members of staff at the Corps' HQ in Lambeth, who are planning to take part in a Commando-style challenge early next year to add to the total.

Although details are yet to be worked out, the challenge may also be open to Area Officers.

Indeed, London Area has already pledged to take on an adventure challenge, and the Sea Cadet Association in Scotland has put up £3,700 – the equivalent of £100 for every unit on its patch

– while Aberdeen unit alone has stumped up £700.

The new, more public, phase of the fundraising scheme will also help publicise the Corps and what it offers to youngsters, with Royalist (and her future replacement) being a major incentive.

Royalist, a sailing brig, has put in 40 years of service and is approaching the end of her working life.

Over those four decades some 30,000 cadets have sailed her – often a pinnacle in that youngsters' time in the organisation, helping to develop teamwork and confidence and face challenges in an exhilarating environment.

But as the Corps' flagship ages her running costs are mounting – they are currently at an all-time high of £440,000 a year – and a replacement makes economic sense.

It is hoped the new ship can be ordered towards the middle of next year, with delivery around a year later.

She will then be put through a commissioning process before being ready for the 2015 sailing season.

Although she will probably look similar to Royalist, the new ship will benefit from the latest technology and safety developments, and will be designed to be able to access virtually every port and marina in the UK, reflecting the countrywide spread of the Corps.

The new ship is also likely to have a lifespan of around 40 years. www.sea-cadets.org/newshipappeal.aspx

Abingdon paddlers power on

SEA Cadets from across the South of England competed in the Southern Area Sea Cadets Paddlesport Regatta at Dreadnought Reach, Reading, in early September.

The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire District was represented by a squad of 18 cadets from units in Milton Keynes, High Wycombe, Oxford and Abingdon, with Abingdon unit fielding 14 cadets in the District squad.

After a hard day of competition, the cadets won medals in 11 of the 16 races – four first places, three second places and four third places.

This consistency meant that the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire District team won the overall event and the trophy was brought triumphantly back to Abingdon unit – the first time that a team from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire District have won the overall competition since the current trophy was first used in 1989.

Four Abingdon cadets went on to represent the Southern Area in the National Paddlesport Regatta at the ExCeL Centre in London.

Speaking after the event, Acting Lt (SCC) Kevin Anderson RNR, CO of Abingdon, said: "I am delighted for the district team, and in particular for the cadets from Abingdon unit who have trained very hard for this event over the past few weeks."

"This will be the third year in succession that Abingdon cadets will represent the Southern Area in the National competition."

In 2006, Abingdon received a grant from the National Lottery Awards for All scheme that allowed them to procure a large amount of paddlesports equipment – and they are now reaping the rewards of that investment.



● A member of Stourbridge RNA helps cadets from Dudley unit pull a barge for charity

RNA members join Dudley barge-pull

THREE years ago *Navy News* reported on how Stourbridge RNA shipmates Alan Beasley and Norman Treece travelled from the West Midlands to Plymouth for a Meet the Navy event, using just bus passes and public transport.

Later they did a similar trip to Chatham for a May Bank Holiday weekend, this time taking 14 different bus routes.

This summer they decided on a different type of journey, helping out their local Sea Cadet unit, and the journey proved every bit as challenging as their earlier endeavours – mainly because this one involved a lot of muscle power.

Dudley unit had organised a sponsored barge-pull between Dudley to Birmingham, a round-

trip distance of 20 miles. S/M Beasley said: "We offered our services thinking that, as ex-RN, they would let us steer the thing for them."

"Not on your nelly! "They made us do our share of the towing."

"We felt like a couple of canal boat hoppers from the 50s."

"Our bus passes didn't help us at all (except on the way back)."

"We did manage to pull five of the ten miles, though."

"All they gave us for our efforts was a free lunch plus a hell of a lot of self-satisfaction."

Shipmates from Stourbridge branch raised money for the event which saw the cadets pull the barge back to Dudley – while Alan and Norman made their way home by bus.



Taste of life on the Rock

CADETS from Huyton and Roby unit in Liverpool spent a week experiencing Service life overseas in Gibraltar. During the visit they sailed with the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club as well as walking up, down and through the maze of tunnels inside the Rock.

They visited a Spanish water park, managed to fit in some shopping, and made time to visit the Trafalgar Cemetery and searched out many of the graves of sailors and marines who died in Gibraltar from wounds suffered at Trafalgar.

Pictured beside the grave of one of the victims of Trafalgar, Lt William Forster, are POC Lloyd Williams and LC Amy Young.



● Pictured are some of the 15 finalists in the Duke of Westminster Awards scheme who benefited from sponsorship by protective clothing and footwear manufacturer Iturri. The company supplied boots and wet-weather clothing for the members of the MOD-sponsored cadet forces who won a place on the prestigious expedition to South Africa in the summer

Precious metal Down Under

MORE than 80,000 Duke of Edinburgh Awards are achieved annually – but not many would have gone to the lengths that a dozen Sea Cadets from Warsash unit did to complete the expedition element of the scheme.

The group, with accompanying adult volunteers, spent two weeks of their summer holidays in Western Australia to crack the Gold (four days and three nights) and Silver (three days and two nights) expeditions.

Both groups were to be taken out of their comfort zone and have the opportunity to experience the true values of the award – leadership, teamwork, self-motivation, communication, confidence, consideration and the ability to learn.

The groups created their own route cards, which would see them covering between 18 and 20km a day on foot, carrying a full pack.

They were faced with a challenging expedition in unfamiliar terrain – the Outback.

Based around the northern section of the Bibbulmun Track, the adventure started at the Kalamunda Northern Terminus.

Their journey took them both north and south of the track, allowing them to use their navigational skills and teamwork to complete each day's leg.

Using predetermined campsites, the groups were required to pitch their tents and cook on their own camp stoves or specially-constructed open fire pits.

Travelling from Kalamunda to Hewett's Hill, then on to Perth Hills National Park and finally – for the Gold team – Bull Creek, before heading back towards the Kalamunda pick-up point.

Although it was the Austral winter the days were still warm, but the nights proved to be rather cold.

With the expeditions completed there were still plenty of highlights to be enjoyed before the long haul home, including seeing kangaroos in the wild, discovering a variety of unfamiliar indigenous birds and plant life and incredible breath-taking scenery.

Both teams said they came away with feelings of exhausting and challenging achievement and, looking back, were at times in awe of their own abilities and accomplishments.

The expeditions took up the first week, so on week two the group ventured out to explore the local culture and history in and around Fremantle and Perth.

Adventures included the history of the Ten Pound Poms; the Western

Australia Museum – Shipwreck Galleries; Fremantle prison; Perth Mint, which was handed back to the government of WA by the British in 1970 and still shows live gold pouring to visitors; and the Bell Tower in Perth, home to the 18 Swan Bells, which includes a dozen bells from St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, which were presented to WA to mark the bicentenary in 1988.

During the visit to the tower they were invited to ring the bells.

They also saw Perth Zoo and Caversham Wildlife Park, where the team met and fed kangaroos, koalas and wombats.

They also interacted with the local Australian Navy cadet unit by spending a day of boating and the following day, as a local community volunteering experience, assisted with maintenance in the unit.

The whole team had been busy fundraising for the past two years to see this opportunity of a lifetime come to fruition.

Grants from the Connaught Drill Hall Trust, the Ulysses Trust, support from local businesses, local Naval establishment messes and community funds all helped support the trip, while the cadets and their families spent many a weekend bag-packing, car-booting, car-washing, running raffles and a variety of other events to make this dream come true.

The team would like to pass on their thanks for the support given by the Royal Australian Navy, particularly Capt Brett Wolski, CO of HMAS Stirling, and Cdr Geoff Hurren of the Australian Navy

Cadets, Western Australia, who provided the British cadets with the loan of expedition equipment in the form of rucksacks, sleeping bags, roll mats, mess tins, cooking stoves, tents, accommodation and food (whilst in Leeuwin Barracks) and a support vehicle.

Thanks also to CPO Lynton Michael for his support and for driving the visitors everywhere, and to Mr Mal Dennet, a volunteer who spent time educating the British cadets and volunteers about the local area, its inhabitants and safety aspects of walking in the Bush.



● Members of the visiting British Sea Cadet party around the fountains at the foot of the Bell Tower in Perth



● The cadets' mascot enjoys a paddle in sea (above) while a red-tailed black cockatoo peers down from a tree at the Silver expedition team (right)



● The visiting Warsash cadets enjoy a day's sport on the water with their colleagues from the Australian Navy Cadets (above) after the expeditions – the Silver team is seen taking a break on a fallen tree (far right). Pictured right are some of the cadets who made the journey to Australia, paddling in the Indian Ocean in Fremantle



● The Gold expedition team head through the Bush along the Bibbulmun Track – a long-distance trail of almost 1,000km – in Western Australia



Burgee – and presentations

BURTON on Trent unit had a successful RN Parade, when Inspecting Officer Cdr Langley was joined by the Mayor of East Staffordshire, the MP for Burton, the High Sheriff of Staffordshire and Admiral Sir Trevor Soar.

The evening included the presentation of the Captain's Medal to Keith Hornby-Priestnall for service to the Corps of over 50 years, including being CO of the unit for 27 years and President until his retirement earlier this year.

The Spencer Award, a ceremonial sword given to the unit by the Spencer family on the death of their father, Lt Eric Spencer, a former member of Burton's staff, was presented to Lt Barry Jones RN (Retd) for his service and dedication to the Corps and TS Modwena for over 30 years. Lt Jones is still an active member of the ship's company.

Those presentations, and the award of a burgee, were a fitting way to end the evening in the unit's 70th anniversary year.

Powerboat pair take title

TWO cadets from Reigate unit won the National Powerboat title at the ExCeL Centre in London.

Seven teams, winners of their Area competitions, competed for the Stirling Wheel Trophy, undertaking a series of manoeuvres including turning the boat alongside a pontoon using warp springs, retrieving a man overboard, mooring between two buoys and towing a larger boat alongside, all within 30 minutes.

Reigate's team, representing Southern area, was helm Cadet Tom Whiteman and crew AC Sam Ashby.

Band contest staged by NTC

AS *Navy News* went to press the Nautical Training Corps was holding its annual band contest at The Triangle in Burgess Hill.

Cadets and Officers are generally aged between eight and 18, from across the Corps, which spans 20 units from the South Coast and up to London.

Training ships will be competing across different classes in a battle of the bands to showcase musical and marching talents that are key to the Corps and exhibited throughout the year at local events, parades and carnivals.

This year, the NTC has a new key sponsor – CJ Field and Co – whose support has allowed the Corps to secure the future of the competition.

Last year's event saw hot competition, with bands performing classic marching tunes mixed in with the likes of Coldplay, *Star Wars* and even the *Dr Who* theme.

Medals presented

TOOTING and Balham unit hosted the Mayor of Wandsworth, Cllr Adrian Knowles, and the Deputy Lieutenant for Wandsworth, Col Ewan Cameron, for the presentation of Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medals.

The presentations were made by London Southern District Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) David Lewis RNR and the Officer-in-Charge of the unit, PO (SCC) K Burton.

The cadets then staged a demonstration of the activities they undertake in the unit.

Farewell to George

SOUTHWARK unit has bid farewell to a stalwart member.

First Lieutenant PO George Whitfield has been with TS Cossack since 2003, but has now taken up a cadetship with the Merchant Navy at the Warsash Maritime Academy.

Southwark Officer-in-Charge Lt (SCC) David Bradbury RNR said: "PO Whitfield will be fondly remembered for his whistle, big stick, PT Badge, sideboards, noisy boots and passion for tarmac."

Early success for Southampton band



THE fledgling band of Southampton unit entered the Southern Area band competition at the Historic Dockyard in Chatham – and came away with some silverware.

The band (left), which was formed in April 2011, entered the Novice class for newly-formed or inexperienced bands, competing against bands from Westerham, Sittingbourne and Margate – one of only a handful of public appearances that the band have made in their short history, and

the first major test of playing and marching at the same time.

The band won first place in the class and also then went on to win best-dressed band overall, judged over all three classes and including some long-standing well-established bands.

CO Mark Lampert said: "For the first ever entry into this competition the results were outstanding – a fitting tribute to the hard work and effort put in by the cadets and the staff who trained them."

Watchet welcomes the Princess Royal

THE 1st Watchet Sea Scout Group were honoured to receive a visit by the Princess Royal to name their new safety boat during her three-hour visit to the harbour town arranged by the RYA.

Watchet had support from the Watchet Boat Owners, Bristol Channel Yachting Association as well as the 1st Watchet Sea Scout Group's RYA Training Centre.

Princess Anne flew into the town by helicopter where, as she landed, a colour party of Sea Scouts raised the Royal Standard from the harbour's quayside adjacent to its distinctive red lighthouse.

The Princess was then driven to the Scout group's new RYA Training Centre on the West Quay of the historic harbour, where she was piped aboard by members of the Sea Scout Group, Beavers, Cubs, Sea Scouts and Explorer Sea Scouts, who were formed up along with the local Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, before she was introduced to county and local dignitaries including the High Sheriff, county councillors and the Chief Constable.

Princess Anne was then

introduced to Somerset's County Scout Commissioner, Shaun Dale, 1st Watchet's RYA Instructor David Mainwaring and RYA Training Centre Principal and Assistant Scout Leader Simon Bale.

Accompanying the Princess along the quayside, Mr Bale explained the role of the Sea Scouts and their RYA training whilst a fleet of the Scout Group's sailing dinghies performed a demonstration of their skills in the outer harbour (pictured).

The Princess was keen to hear of the Scout Group's experience and use of the tidal waters of the Bristol Channel, which has the second highest and fastest tidal range in the world.

As RYA President the Princess was very interested in youth sailing and seeing the young members of the group on the water.

Reaching the end of the harbour, Princess Anne was told of the role and history of the town's lighthouse, which is 150 years old, by RYA South West Vice President Don Sutherland.

Returning along the quayside

again, Mr Bale was on hand to answer the Princess's questions on the involvement of the Scout Group in the community, its history, and the continued development of its water activities.

Reaching the assembled dignitaries outside the Scout Group's RYA Training Centre, the Princess unveiled a plaque celebrating the lighthouse's history before embarking on a tour of the rest of the harbour, including the Market House Museum, the Coastguard Station and the town's railway station and boat museum.

The final part of the Princess's tour was to unveil the name of the Scout Group's new safety and instructional powerboat, named Jubilee in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Having unveiled the boat's name, Princess Anne was presented with a posy by Simon

Bale's daughter Amelia before the Princess was piped away by the Scout Group as she left to board her helicopter.

As the aircraft departed the Sea Scout colour party lowered the Royal Standard, ending a memorable day.



Highland challenge for CCF



● CCF cadets prepare to board a Sea King search and rescue helicopter from HMS Gannet during their adventurous training camp at Garelochhead

Picture: Nigel Huxtable

COMBINED Cadet Force (CCF) cadets on a training camp in Scotland faced characteristically wet and windy weather on the Monroes as they undertook a three-day expedition.

Carrying 20kg rucksacks and camping each night at 500 metres, the expedition was challenging – though at least the rain kept the midges at bay...

The group climbed over 1,000m after dinner on the first evening, and Day Two included an 18km traverse.

And the whole thing ended with an ascent of the 926m Beinn Narnain, which was completed in a hailstorm.

But it was not all about hiking in wet weather – the cadets also had a crack at the climbing wall at HMS Neptune followed by rock-climbing to put the theory to the test, there was a visit to the impressive Faslane shipyard, some off-road cycling through a forest, and an acquaint flight on a search and rescue Sea King helicopter from HMS Gannet flight, based on the Prestwick Airport site in Ayr.

Rye smiles during trip to carrier

ONE of the best parts of being a Sea Cadet is the possibility of going on a ship's visit – normally to one of the Royal Navy's fishery patrol vessels or university training ships.

However, seven members of Rye have spent a day on board helicopter carrier HMS Illustrious, the unit's affiliated ship and one of the largest vessels of the Fleet.

The seven cadets left early one morning to arrive at Portsmouth Naval Base by 0900 where they joined the ship.

Whilst on board, the cadets got a feel of what it would be like to live and work on board a working vessel, taking part in firefighting, damage control, marine engineer, first aid and sea survival exercises.

Kieran Baker, aged 15, said: "We had an excellent day – the firefighting and first aid was excellent."

The Officer in Charge of Rye Sea Cadets, CPO (SCC) Steve Smith, said: "We like to get our cadets taking part in as many activities as possible."

"We've had a very busy summer and this was the icing on the cake!"

"I'd just like to thank the Commanding Officer of HMS Illustrious and the ships crew for their hospitality."

Shanty night raises funds for Banbury

BANBURY unit benefited from a Sea Shanty evening staged by the Banbury Folk Club and the Brackley Folk Club.

Cadets and staff supporting the event opened the evening with the Colours ceremony to give it a proper nautical feeling.

The evening was organised by Banbury Admin Officer Don Thompson, a member of Brackley Folk Club, and Derek and Mary Decker of the Banbury club.

Around 70 people attended the evening and over £535 was raised for unit funds. Many thanks to all those involved with putting on the evening and to all those who came along to support.

The Captain Sea Cadets paid an informal visit to TS Harvester – the first visit to Banbury unit of the Captain of the Corps since the mid-1980s.

Capt Mark Windsor was greeted by the Commanding Officer and members of the Unit Management Committee, given a tour of the new HQ and saw classes under instruction, including the junior section.

After his tour Capt Windsor held a question-and-answer session with cadets and staff before making several presentations to cadets and also to retiring Admin Officer Alex Spittal, who received tickets for a weekend trip to York from the cadets, staff and UMC to thank him for his work over the past four years.



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SEA CADETS

Areas vie for glory on water

A STRING of winning performances on the water at Southport and London put **South West Area** in an unassailable position in their bid to retain the coveted Peter Riley Trophy.

There were plenty of points up for grabs at Waterside Lodge, which hosted the National Sailing Regatta, and the ExCeL complex in London's Docklands, once again the setting for the Sea Cadets' National Combined Regatta.

First up was the sailing in Merseyside, where five different competitions made up the regatta.

With light winds and a full turnout, all four scheduled races ran smoothly and on time for the four dinghy fleets over the weekend.

The windsurfing regatta was a huge success – not only was there a fantastic turnout, but Sport England also provided match-funding for the provision of six mobile windsurfing trailers, which allowed all areas to provide pre-regatta training for the first time.

The host area, **North West**, won the Open Bosun class, but the honours in the rest of the regatta were shared between the South West and Peter Riley contenders **Eastern**.

The South West turned up trumps in the Junior Topper and three windsurfing disciplines, and shared the spoils with Eastern in the Portsmouth Yardstick class.

Eastern were successful in the Open Picos, and when the final tallies were made, South West and Eastern were declared joint winners.

The focus shifted south to the waters of the Royal Victoria Docks in London at the end of September for the Combined – one day of frenetic effort in the shadow of the ExCeL Centre, venue for a number of Olympic and Paralympic events over the summer.

The preceding week saw terrible weather, with high winds and driving rain, yet come the big day the sky was blue and the wind just enough for the sail boat handling competition.

With the teams all dressed in their area colours the atmosphere is always quite something, especially around both finish lines, the paddlesport at the western end and the rowing finishing at the eastern end of the ExCel quayside.

The regatta tested a wide range of skills, from power boat handling to Yole rowing, and concluded with a tight finish.

When the results were all in and audited, **Southern Area** were declared the winners with 20 points, just one point ahead of



Picture: James Clarke



South West.

The five main paddlesport trophies went to South West (Nottingham Cup for boys junior winners and Mike Poole Cup for boys open winners), Southern (Barbara Simpson Cup for girls junior winners), **Northern Ireland** (Ulster Cup for girls open winners) Southern, South West and Northern Ireland (joint winners of the Armitage Trophy

for overall paddlesports winners).

Assistant HQ Staff Officer Boats Lt Cdr (SCC) Frank Cea RNR said: "Thanks should go to the adult volunteers who trained the cadets and organised their own Area and District Regattas, without which these regattas would simply not happen."

The final Peter Riley Trophy placings will be decided when the shooting results are in.



Picture: James Clarke



Picture: James Clarke



Picture: James Clarke

Show your support for RN sport

ONE of the charities which is key to the success of many of the RN and RM sporting associations in these pages is looking for trustees to help oversee its work.

The Naval Service Sports Charity – a subsidiary of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity – supports the sporting activities of Royal Navy and Royal Marine personnel.

Its funds, which come from personal contributions through payroll giving, investments and other charitable donations, provide the running costs of RN sports associations, Command sports funds, coaching fees and support to elite athletes.

The charity owns the Naval Service Sports Accommodation and employs an increasing number of staff at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth.

The charity is run by a board of nine trustees, drawn primarily from serving or former personnel.

Over the next year, the board intends to broaden its expertise to cover its expanding remit by recruiting five new trustees, who are not MOD employees and who have collective experience of human resources, employment law and charity administration, finance and law.

Ideally one of these new trustees should have senior management experience and will consent to be the chairman in due course. A keen interest in sport and good team-working skills are essential and a Service background is desirable.

As a trustee, you would help to ensure that the charity is run efficiently and that the support given to sport is fairly distributed across the RN.

The bulk of the involvement will centre on board meetings which are generally held three times a year in Portsmouth.

Trustees are unpaid, but expenses can be reimbursed.

More information and application forms can be obtained from company secretary Norman Jackson by email to nssc-cs@sky.com or on 07512 857 806. The closing date is January 4 2013.

Épée fail

THE Navy's épée team appearing at the RAF One-Hit competition at Cosford showed that the RN will have to up its game if it is to have any chance of victory in the Inter-Service fencing championships next month.

The team of Cdr Matt Clark (MOD), Lt Dickie Byrd (MOD) and Lt Matt Cullen (Raleigh) only managed a sorry fifth place out of six teams in a small turnout for the annual Charles Mott memorial trophy – with the cup going to a 'scratch' RAF team.

However, with four Navy fencers in the gym and teams of only three, rather than fence with a reserve the fourth fencer Mne Ed Hill (43 Cdo(FPGRM)) joined another scratch side and showed himself to be the best Senior Service fencer by far on the day making a telling contribution to his team's second place.

The RN cannot claim that the RAF just got lucky in the one-hit competition as a hastily re-organised team of three, which included Mne Hill (not a selection error earlier – he just arrived in the depths of Shropshire last), was despatched by a humiliating 45-19 by the RAF in the longer match which followed.

Some honour was salvaged by the RN fencers in their last match of the day, emphatically defeating the RAF veterans, although not by such a massive margin.

Thanks to the RAF for putting on an enjoyable day's fencing, and Navy fencers look forward to taking them and the Army on again (er, after quite a bit of training) at the Inter-Services.

Taw of duty for surf kayakers



IT SEEMS that inspiration was drawn from the Team GB successes in kayaking as, for the first time in a decade, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines **surf kayak and waveski** team have succeeded in bringing home the Inter-Services trophy.

With a full-strength team of 14 paddlers competing in four different classes, the RN came away with a large points victory over the RAF and the Army (in third) after a hotly-contested competition at Saunton Sands in Devon, writes team captain PO 'JC' Cowell (HMS Sultan).

The weekend was preceded by a training camp, which gave the novice paddlers a chance to learn – and the experienced a chance to hone their skills in the fine North Devon surf before the competition.

With surf conditions during the training ranging from 'small and clean' to 'huge

and messy', it provided some entertaining moments for all paddlers with some good experience being gained by the novices.

Classes in the competition were: waveski, high performance, international and female.

The waveski is a highly-maneuvrable paddle-craft on which the paddler sits atop and the rest are kayaks. The high-performance kayak is an aggressive short-boat design under three metres in length with fins on the bottom, while the international class is a long-boat designed over three metres and with no fins. In the female class, paddlers can paddle any type of the above craft including standard sit-on-tops.

On competition day itself, the conditions in the Taw estuary started off with some of the cleanest seen at Inter-Service events in

recent years which initially led to a crowded competition area due to the amount of normal surfers on the public beach.

One RN team member even got run over by a surfer during a heat, but luckily it resulted in no injury or damage, only the loss of a good scoring wave!

As the day progressed, the conditions became messier adding an increased challenge to the competition. At the end of the heats, the RN ended up with seven team members reaching the finals; the results were:

Waveski final: 1 Mne Adrian Thorn, 5 AB Simon Mills
High performance final: 2 PO JC Cowell, 4 C/Sgt Marty Aldrich (pictured above engulfed by the surf)
International final: 3 WO James Batchelor RM
Female final: 3 AB Sarah Rushton, 4 Lt Charley Tysler

For information about the sport contact 'JC' on surf@rnka.co.uk or see www.rnka.co.uk.



High-scoring Scrabble

THE annual Inter-Services martial arts competition – one of the lesser known tri-Service rivalries – took place at RAF Cranwell.

Appearing in his first Navy level event, ET(ME) Dave 'Scrabble' Lukasiewicz from the Royal Navy Presentation Team, based at RAF Northolt in Middlesex, hoped to justify a week out of the office by bringing home a medal in his sport, taekwondo.

With over 50 competitors, the fighting (literally) was fierce at the top.

After five years out of martial arts due to injury the 24-year-old made it into the final of not just one, but three events: the team sparring and both the individual and team patterns.

Following a week of intense training, the competition rounds were fought over the weekend and, by Sunday night, Scrabble claimed two silvers in the pattern events and gold in the team sparring – as can be seen in the picture above.

He returned to work bruised and battered but still smiling and hoping to compete again in the near future.

"Even though it was an exhausting week, it was a great laugh!" said Scrabble.

"One of the best times I've had in the Navy."

Smells like Tignes spirit once again

WITH the 2013 RN **ski and snowboard** championships fast approaching, the men's and women's teams are looking to recruit new talent to the squad.

As usual, the French resort of Tignes will host the event, which next year takes place between January 12 and 26.

During both weeks of the championships the team will have their scouts out on the slopes spotting new talent to help the teams build on the success of the last couple of years.

Straight after the winter sports fest there'll be a team training week (also in Tignes) from January 27 February 1.

Then proceedings shift to Meribel for the Inter-Service alpine championships (February 1-8).

"Last season saw the best ever result for both snowboarding teams at the alpine Inter-Services – winning best overall male and both overall freestyle team titles," said Lt Alex Kelley, who captained the ladies' board team this year.

"We have two excellent and very experienced coaches specialising in both freestyle and boarder cross training who are able to offer any tips and advice to riders of all abilities."

Packages for Tignes for the RN championships are available from £349. See www.rnwsa.co.uk for details.

Those interested in boarding should contact Lt Kelley at alexkelley99@hotmail.com.

Several tsar turns

RM 4 RN U23 1 (Inter-Command Final)

Group games saw the Royals beat both Scotland and Naval Air Command convincingly, scoring ten goals and not conceding in either match.

Their opponents, the RN U23 side, reached the final with impressive wins against Portsmouth and Plymouth Commands.

The final's 4-1 scoreline did not reflect the match, with the U23s holding a deserved 1-0 lead at half time.

The second period saw the Royals up their game and in the 60th minute Mne 'KT' Tunstall unleashed a 25-yard screamer into the top right-hand corner giving the RN keeper no chance.

This proved to be the turning point; further goals from Mikey Husbands, Jase O'Brien and Mike Scott sealed the win for the green berets.

Man of the match chosen by the championship sponsor Vic Baker was Tunstall.

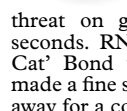
RN Vets 4 RM Vets 3

The curtain-raiser to this year's Inter-Command Championship final saw the RN Vets take on their Royal Marines counterparts, in what is hoped will be an annual fixture between the two teams.

The Royals started the game brightly and produced their first



ONSIDE with Lt Cdr Neil Horwood, RNFA



threat on goal in the first ten seconds. RN keeper Jimmy 'The Cat' Bond was equal to it and made a fine save deflecting the ball away for a corner.

The Royals made the first breakthrough after 15 minutes when some good play around the RN penalty area finally ended with a low drive into the bottom corner giving The Cat no chance.

This stirred the RN into action and two quick-fire goals from Paddy Stephens gave the RN a 2-1 half-time lead.

Manager Ian Rees made some changes to the second-half line-up which paid dividends early on: a Franz Beckenbauer-like run from Steve Johnson set up a crossing opportunity for Lee Derbyshire to produce a pinpoint cross for Fraser Quirke to rifle home from close range.

The RN increased their lead when Paul Lewsley scored the goal of the game with a spectacular effort from all of 35 yards. The RM vets were now gambling and pushing players forward which eventually led to them scoring two goals, one very late in the game.

The RN side stood firm against a persistent barrage from the Royals to hold out and win the game.

HMS Illustrious 7 Russian destroyer Admiral Kulakov 1

Lusty faced a team from the visiting Russian Udaloy-class destroyer Admiral Kulakov on a five-day stop in Portsmouth.

With only a handful of first team players to choose from, manager CPO Stevie Dalton could only field a team of largely unknown quality but he was not to be disappointed as the Mighty Lusty put on a great display against their Russian counterparts.

The first half saw Illustrious take the game to the opposition, with ET(ME) Jacko Jackson going close on numerous occasions but finding an inspired Russian

goalkeeper making save after save.

The deadlock was eventually broken when OC Matt Pennington broke into the box and, after seeing his original shot stopped, he tucked away the rebound.

After some tricky wing play the same player found himself with only the goalkeeper to beat and guided the ball between the posts for a 2-0 lead.

Just before the interval, Pennington again found himself in the Russian's penalty box and as he tried to turn the defender he was brought down and was awarded a penalty which he successfully converted, sending the keeper the wrong way and completing his hat-trick.

The Russians' half-time talk saw them better motivated and they started the second half on the attack, forcing Illustrious goalkeeper AB(Sea) Dave Vickers into action.

The young Welsh stopper was not to be found wanting and helped keep the score at 3-0 to the home team.

Illustrious failed to make the most of some early second-half chances. However, things were soon to change and an excellent run by substitute OC Waleed Tolah saw him pick out the veteran CPO Stevie Dalton at the back post; he calmly put the ball in the net giving the keeper no chance.

Tolah was playing with confidence and after a mazy dribble left five Russians in his wake and struck a 25-yard shot in to the bottom right hand corner to put Lusty 5-0 up.

The Russians continued to fight their corner and on a rare break blasted the ball past the stranded home keeper.

Not wanting to give the visitors a way back into the game, Illustrious upped the tempo and, after a great bit of play in midfield, a pass from OC Rob Wheeler found Dalton outside the box and the player manager curled an effort into the

top corner for his second of the game.

Dalton went on to score his hat-trick when AB(CIS) Sean Perree set Jackson clear on the right and he found Dalton in the centre of the six-yard box to slot home from close range.

The game then fizzled out for the remaining ten minutes and Illustrious ran out 7-1 winners.

The **RNFA Referees Society** was proud to host international assistant referee Mike Mularkey – who's officiated at more than two dozen Champions League matches – at the annual Royal Marines FA Tunney Cup at CTCRM Lymington.

He arrived in Devon just in time for the last game of the day between Scottish rivals 43 Cdo FPGRM (Faslane) and 45 Cdo (Arbroath).

An absolute classic 4-4 draw was served up, including a red card, some world-class saves and a Karl Lockhart second-half hat-trick.

Mike said he was amazed at the quality of play and the tenacity of both teams, combined with their discipline at being able to brush off poor challenges with a wry smile and wisecrack.

After the game Mike met up with the Royal Navy FA basic referees course students, who had just completed their first day's training with course instructors CPO Ian Harley and Barney Barnett.

The international official delivered a fantastic presentation in the WOs & Sgts Mess, which focussed on his progression from a footballer of limited ability to one of the top assistant referees in the world.

The students were treated to an amazing insight into the world of football at the highest level, with stories of the elation at his selection for Euro 2008, only to be dampened by a missed offside in the Austria-Poland game which led to the English refereeing team being sent home after the group stage. Who would have thought that only two years later he would be the assistant referee in the biggest game of all: the Holland-Spain World Cup Final in 2010?

Sixth sensational

IN A triumphant year for British sport, here's another victory to make you proud: hammering the Aussies. On their home turf.

For the sixth consecutive time, the Royal Navy's rugby union 1st XV raised high the Commonwealth Cup, the trophy contested by the three giants of the sport: Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

This year the Royal Australian Navy were the hosts, but with the home nation having been put to the sword by the Kiwis 41-13, they faced the prospect of the wooden spoon in the deciding clash with the RN.

For their part, the Senior Service had narrowly edged out the New Zealanders 21-18 in a nail-biting encounter.

The Kiwis only needed the Aussies to beat the Poms and not score more than 52 points and the trophy would be theirs to take back to New Zealand.

So time for the decider. We'll allow Maj Steve Melbourne, RNRU spokesman, to tell the story:

The changing room was ready, shirts hung up, the ensign hanging at the end of the room and Capt Tom Glover (CAF) had the warm up area set-up and ready to go.

The President of RNRU Vice Admiral Phil Jones came in to see the new players and also Capt Stu McLaren RM (RAF Halton), for whom this would more than likely be his last game in a Navy shirt.

As the president left, the changing room returned to business and Capt Charlie Chacksfield worked like a demon to get the lads ready for action.

Then it was to the warm-up area with Glover for 15 minutes, then back inside for the final preps before the walk out to meet the Royal Australian Navy.

The teams lined up and the anthems were played and sung. The RN were playing in front of a very partisan crowd of not only Aussies, but Kiwis as well; the Southern Hemisphere crowd was really rooting for an Aussie win.

The RAN started well and within four minutes were 5-0 up through veteran lock Jason Harrington, who is the only player to have played in every CNRC.

The RAN's close-to-the-ruck driving game kept the RN on the back foot and the big Aussie forwards punished the Navy defence, smothering any attacks. However, the Brits stuck to their task as laid out by head coach CPO Ash Coates.



● One of the most inspiring sights in the world – and Sydney Harbour Bridge... The RNRU team take in the sights before their Commonwealth Cup triumph

One of the new players, young AB(WS) Chris Davies (HMS Somerset), playing his first game in a Senior XV team, had a hard time in the early scrums, but he more than made up for this in his work around the field and in the lineout.

Mne Scott Puleston (30 Cdo RM) continued where he had left off in the Kiwi game, uncompromising and hard running at blindside. Mne Seti Raumakita (42 Cdo) chopped down the big RAN forwards and made sure they paid for every yard they gained.

As the clock ticked past the first quarter, the RAN forwards started to tire and this allowed the RN backs to begin imposing themselves on the game.

AET Jon Humphreys (Yeovilton) made some significant inroads into the RAN back line, supported as ever by centres ET(ME) Dale Sleeman (HMS Ocean) and AB(WS) Tom Davies (HMS Illustrious).

From a ruck, scrum-half POAET Dave Pascoe (Culdrose) went blind, drawing in three players including the left wing, before releasing Raumakita down the wing. A valiant last-ditch tackle by RAN full-back ABMT Daryl Seden could not stop Seti's try, which was converted by Pascoe: 5-7 at half time.

The RN made changes at half time to the front row, bringing

on AET Kye Beasley (Culdrose) for Mne Josh Terry (RM Poole) and Capt Chris McArdle (HMS Ocean) for Lt Ed Gaught (HMS Somerset).

As Pascoe converted a penalty to give the RN a 10-5 lead, powerhouse Sgt Gaz Evans (HMS President) left the field due to a knee injury. Evans was replaced by CPO Sumo Thompson (HMS Sultan).

Again great work by Pascoe and Raumakita allowed the ball to be driven infield to the RAN five-metre line, before Pascoe released Humphreys who was brought down by two tacklers just before the line. However, he popped the ball up to Mne Greg Wellings (RMASC) for his first try: 15-5.

The RAN forwards were looking tired, but still causing problems at the rucks and mauls. However Beasley had stabilised the scrum and was creating havoc in the loose.

It was at one of these scrums that the RN got a nudge on the RAN pack, the RAN scrum-half lost sight of the ball and Raumakita snapped it up, before off-loading to fellow back-row forward Thompson.

He in turn shipped it out to Puleston and Sleeman hit the line at pace. He drew in the wing and full-back before passing to the speeding Wellings, who still had to work for the try. Pascoe converted: 22-5 after 54 mins.

The RN made a few more changes which saw Lt Tyler Smart (MWS Collingwood) and Mne Josh Blackburn (CTCRM) come into the fray.

From a scrum going backwards inside the Brits' five-metre line, Pascoe released Sleeman who saw open space and got up to the 22m.

The ball was recycled and Beasley hit the ball at pace, making another ten metres. The ball was recycled again and fly-half Mne Nathan Huntley (42 Cdo) made Humphreys stretch for the ball. Humphreys then turned the RAN winger inside-out before offloading to the boot of Wellings who chased his own kick and scored his RN rugby hat-trick. Pascoe converted: 29-5.

Pascoe and Humphreys were replaced by LAET John Clay (HMS Sultan) and LET(WESM) Nick Bell (HMS Vanguard). Clay was straight into the action and released the backs which saw Davies see a mismatch with the RAN prop; he took advantage of the odds and rounded him to score. Clay then went on to convert the try: 36-5.

The RAN had never given up and hit back with an unconverted try to finish the game 36-10 – but it couldn't stop the RN juggernauts enjoying their sixth consecutive win in the Commonwealth Cup.

Raumakita was deservedly awarded the 'man of the match' title by the RAN coaching team.



Kev karts to second place

SHENINGTON near Banbury was the venue for the 2012 Inter-Services endurance karting championship with Yeovilton's Lt Kevin Westbrook in the seat for the RN in the endurance and sprint events.

In the endurance race, the RN driver qualified in third place – despite his kart being at least 10kg heavier than the Army racers.

From the start, Kev slotted into second position but was passed one and a half laps later by Army Karting One.

He decided to try to work with the soldier to catch the leader, who had already established a convincing lead.

The trio left the rest of the field behind; after just seven minutes, they encountered the first back-marker who must have been involved in some first-lap carnage.

Army Karting One got past the hold-up, but Kev had to wait a few more corners. He lost quite a bit of ground and got his head down, catching up with the front-runners much quicker than expected, so immediately passed them and pulled away.

Some of his hard work was undone when he was lapping a slower kart which was passing another racer; Kev caught them by surprise and they started to turn in on him. All three went into a spin, but fortunately did not sustain any damage.

A few laps later the pit crew called him in for his fuel stop. Apart from a big air lock costing quite a bit of time, pit lane discipline was very good.

Kev returned to the track and raced until just over one hour of the race distance had elapsed. After missing the pit crew waving the board at him for a few laps, he eventually entered the pits and the team swapped drivers with Mike sitting in the hotseat.

Mike hit the track and was soon on the pace. His session was quite uneventful and the RN held on to third place until the final stop – a dummy driver change to meet the minimum driver change requirement. This was another efficient stop, but the Navy had dropped to fourth.

A few minutes later, we were back up to 3rd as all the other teams completed their stops. The light was now fading fast and Mike was struggling to see through his iridium-coated visor.

Despite being briefed that the race would be two hours or end at 7.30pm, the deadline came and went.

Fortunately, the Navy had enough fuel for the extra ten minutes – although Army Karting One were beginning to sweat as they were running very low.

As it was, the final ten minutes were quiet and the RN crossed the line in third place – and as second-placed military team.

The Army team which topped the military leaders' board enjoyed good drivers with good kit which was well set up.

Had the Navy ironed out their re-fuelling issue, they could have given them a much closer run.

Sunday was not a successful day. Kev struggled for pace all day and when it came to scoring points in the final, he made it to the fourth corner on the first lap where he was a victim of loading the kart in front – so he failed to make the hairpin.

Kev re-started his kart and ran to the finish, overtaking a couple of slower racers, but ended the day very disappointed.

Picture: PO Dutchy Holland, HMS Collingwood

Claire's 'Ryder Cup' heroics seal win

THIS year's Inter Service Golf Championships were staged at Woodhall Spa Golf Club, Lincolnshire, in the third week of September.

A renowned top-50 UK course, the venue proved a fitting location for the season's 'blue ribbon' event, writes Cdr Bob White.

With the Championships consisting of the Men's event on the Hotchkiss Course and the Ladies on the Bracken Course; both courses lived up to their reputation with the undulating greens on the Bracken and cavernous bunkers on the Hotchkiss, providing players with a demanding test of their ability.

As the 'lead' Service, the RN teams had the benefit of an extra day of practice before playing their matches against the RAF/Army, in a round-robin format of foursomes (in the morning) and singles (afternoon) matchplay; the RN matches having been determined by the RAF (men) and Army (ladies) winning on day one.

The RN (men's) team faced their singles matches with a two-point deficit to the Army, having lost the foursomes in the morning, 3½ to 1½, whereas the RN (ladies) were the stronger team in their match and comfortably beat the RAF, 3 to 1.

The RN (men) fought well in the afternoon and despite some exciting finishes in the closing matches, lost the overall match to the Army, 5½ to 9½.

The RN (ladies) had a tough set of singles matches and although they narrowly lost the

afternoon session, given their earlier foursomes result, they ran out winners, 6½ to 5½ – a fantastic team effort, with notable performances coming from WO Julie Palmer and LA(Phot) Claire Myers.

On the final day of competition, the RN (men) needed to beat the RAF by a convincing margin to stand any chance of winning the tournament.

With the RAF leading the morning session by three points, and despite some valiant efforts in the single matches from the RN team, the RAF were victors, 9½ to 5½ – having beaten the RN and Army, the RAF were crowned 2012 Champions.

Conversely, the RN (ladies) had control of their destiny knowing that a victory over the Army would see them take the title.

Strong leadership from their team captain, Lt Cdr Lauren Hulston and a resilient team spirit, saw them establish a healthy lead from the morning foursomes matches, 3½ to 1½.

With eight points on offer in the afternoon, the strength and experience of the RN players in the back three matches proved to be vital in achieving a halved match in the singles, and an overall winning result of 7½ to 4½.

Well done to the RN (ladies) running out worthy winners, clinching the Inter-Services 2012 title for the third time in the past five years.

LA(Phot) Myers was the 'Ian Poulter' of the team taking a maximum four points from her matches, and Sub Lt Amy Bolland merits mention for a superb performance as the rookie, especially as she only made the team a week before the tournament.



● LPT Kerry Isbell 'splashing' out of a greenside bunker

Gary's 12 years of greatness

THAT man Gary Thomas has done it again: 12 Inter-Services men's **swimming** victories in 12 consecutive years – or 14 in the last 15 years if you prefer (the RAF won in 2000).

In 2011, the swimming coach led the RN to a relatively-narrow win over the RAF; in 2012, the Senior Service took the title by 15 clear points, *writes Lt Cdr Alan Walker*.

As it turned out, it looked like the Army might be the dark horses of the event: two 'unknown' lance corporals powered to first and second places in the opening event, the 800m, 25 seconds ahead of the first RN swimmer, Lt Rhodri Humphreys.

To win the men's 100m butterfly, multi-gold-medallist from previous years, Sub Lt Jack Lay (Talent), got within a second of AB Jason Beresford's six-year-old IS record.

His triumph helped to propel the RN into a lead over their rivals which they never let slip.

In the 200m backstroke, LPT Stu Mantle (Sultan) who has been ever-present since 1999 and is always dependable, won the event eight and ten seconds clear of the second and third-placed RAF swimmers.

The scores now were: RN 23, RAF 20, Army 19 – the closest any of them came to the RN for the rest of the championships.

AB Rob Shaw (Torbay) stepped up for his third year at the Inter-Services and successfully defended both his 100m and 200m breaststroke titles.

In the 100m he beat his nearest rival, SAC J Nicholas by 6½ seconds and the ever-dependable Sgt Brian 'Been Around Forever' Kirk CTRM, split the RAF pair to earn third place.

In the 400m Humphreys took third place and Lt Cdr Ali Witt fourth before possibly the most punishing event of all, the 4 x 2 lengths individual medley.

It looked like another victory for Jack Lay, but credit the RAF's Nick Barker; he overtook Lay over the last five metres to win by 0.1 sec.

There are few sights more exciting than a men's 100m freestyle race – it is hard for mere mortals to comprehend the speed and power as competitors glide and thrash their way to the finishing line.

Sadly Mne Joe Tellett, the IS record holder and Commonwealth Games triathlete swimmer in 2010, is no longer serving but his 52.28 100m freestyle record still stands from 2009.

The win this year by AB Jeremy Osborne (Chiddingfold) in 55.21s put that time into perspective.

Jeremy represented Guernsey in the 2006 Commonwealth Games and the 2011 Island Games. He is an excellent prospect for the elite athlete scheme and has a strong possibility of selection for further representative honours at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Quiet man Mne Tom Hogan (40 Cdo) in third was 1½ seconds in front of a trailing Army pair in fourth and fifth – and helped put more distance between the RN and the rest.

Rob Shaw cruised like a Tomahawk missile to win by some nine seconds in the 200m breaststroke; AB Josh Spibey (FDU1), despite only recently having just finished his first full sea draft and even more recently recovering from a broken arm, was rewarded with a well-earned bronze medal behind the RAF's Ben Terry.

RN supporters were becoming confident now – perhaps just a little too confident.

Osborne was going to win the 200m freestyle wasn't he? After all he won both in 2011.

In what was probably the closest race of the day Osborne was narrowly beaten in the 200m freestyle by a former GB elite squad member LAC Green, which helped to narrow the RN-RAF gap to seven points.

The final individual event would have a major bearing on proceedings.

Even Napoleon Bonaparte recognised the value of Royal Marines in one's hour of need.

Mnes Matt Edwards (CTCRM) and Rob Hall (RM Poole) would go for the RN in the two-length freestyle 'splash and dash'.

Edwards' performance astounded the coaches, winning in 35 seconds, while Hall 'creamed' his way to a splendid second place.

With only the relays to go, the RN enjoyed an 11-point lead over the RAF with 82, while the Army laboured on 53.

Mantle gave the RN a solid start in the backstroke handing over the lead to the next RN swimmer.

Individual event winners Shaw (breaststroke) and Lay (butterfly) increased the RN lead and appropriately it was left to RN team captain WO Nicholas 'Frankie' Vaughan to cruise to victory for the RN.

The final relay, the 6x2 freestyle, saw the six fastest freestylers from each Service in the water.

Edwards took the lead leg and established a lead that the team would never lose.

AB Darryl Pace then helped the team in their quest for gold, handing over the lead to Hogan who put in a tremendous third leg which extended the RN's lead.

Spibey, known for his sprint pace, widened the gap, as did Lt Cdr Witt, deputy chairman of RNASA, before Hall completed the winning team performance for the RN in 3min 31.3 sec. The RAF trailed in just over 2½ seconds behind with the Army some eight seconds down in third.

And so the RN (109) triumphed over the airmen (94) and soldiers (61).

In the women's event, the RN faced the impossible task of ousting the Army from their 14-year perch at the top.

Make that 15 years.

The RN has considerably fewer female personnel than the Army and quite a lot fewer than the RAF.

Being the smallest in numbers often manifests itself in third place at competition.

But in 2012, there were some outstanding performances to help the RN to a very creditable second.

AB Samantha Eagle (Kent) blew away the opposition in the 400m event in 4m 52s.

AB Sarah Feltham (Duncan) was the only RN competitor in the 200m backstroke, splitting the first two soldiers to take second place.

Eagle was the clear winner in the 100m backstroke while Feltham came in third, five seconds behind her.

The 4x2 individual medley – eight lengths, two for each of the four strokes – is a tough event with Musn Caitlin O'Malley (RMB Plymouth), a valued member of the RN swim team for 11 seasons, the sole naval representative. She came home in a very creditable third.

Once she'd got her breath back she was in the pool again for the 100m butterfly, taking second place as the only RN swimmer in the pool (the RAF, too could field no second competitor).

These gaps in the ranks ensured that ultimately the Army triumphed 29 points ahead of the RN's second-placed 75, with the RAF taking the wooden spoon on 58.

And finally... 15 years ago it was possible for the IS water polo title to be shared.

In 2012, all three teams won one and lost one, but a ruling taken in the early part of this century brought goal difference into play.

The RAF beat the Army 13-10, who then dispatched the RN 12-9. The latter came back strongly in the final encounter with the RAF 9-7.

When the scores were tallied, the Air Force were declared champions thanks to their superior (+1) goal difference.

GOING downhill makes things so much faster...

A member of the RN **windsurfing** team zips across Portland Harbour during a week of speed on the boards

– where, once again, the Senior Service proved it's faster than the Army and RAF.

For the past 40 years speed freaks have converged off the Jurassic Coast for Weymouth Speed Week, aiming for the fastest average speed on a wind-powered watercraft of any description over a 500-metre course in the harbour.

Despite a mammoth effort from all involved, no-one managed to break the event record of 38.4kts but the Royal Navy managed to power through the bad weather to retain the Inter-Services Speed Team Championship title.

In recent years the event has become dominated by windsurfers and now forms a fixture on the European Windsurfing Speed Sailing Tour. It also decides the British Speed Sailing Championships and, most importantly, provides the venue for the Inter-Services and Royal Navy Speed Sailing competition.

In line with the event's ethos, which sees novice racers rubbing shoulders with professionals and world champions, the Royal Navy Windsurfing Team ranged in experience from those who have been racing for many years to those for whom this was their first ever event.

The team also saw a healthy cross section of ranks ranging from able seaman to commodore, and although the sea is not their natural element, a windsurfer from the RAF and three from the Army also competed.

This year's event also saw a good range of October weather and accordingly a good variety of wind and water conditions to test the 100

competitors. The first few days saw relatively benign conditions with light winds and flat water, ideal conditions in fact for the Navy sailors to try their skill on a Tridem.

This five-metre-long windsurfer, powered by three sails and with a crew of three, is a relic from the earliest years of the competition and was provided by the event organisers with a challenge for teams to 'give it a go'.

Recognising that successful control of such a leviathan requires commitment, courage and discipline together with a good sense of humour, the Navy stepped up to the mark.

With an impressive display of team work, and the loud encouragement of the many spectators, the Tridem was successfully piloted along the length of the Speed Week course for the first time in forty years.

The middle of the week saw fresher winds and choppy seas which, while not ideal for speed sailing which craves mirror-flat water, provided some challenging sailing: significant skill is required for sailor and his windsurfer to remain connected when travelling at a fair rate of knots over rough water. The Navy achieved some creditable speeds with the way being led by speed-week-novice Lt Cdr Russ Clark (815 NAS), who managed an impressive speed of 28.2 knots.

Light and fickle winds limited racing on the penultimate day of competition but the final day provided the best conditions of the week: a fresh south westerly wind, flat water and sunshine. For most of the day speeds were on a par with the best of the rest of the week.

Late in the afternoon however, as the event drew to a close, a fierce squall blew through.

In this ten-minute period, with his second-to-last run of the week, Lt Paul Morris recorded 29.2 knots, the fastest speed of the week by a Serviceman, out-pacing CPO Jonny Walker, his closest competitor, by six tenths of a knot.

As well as the Inter-Services speed team championships, Lt Morris took the trophy as Inter-Services speed champion, and Lt Cdr Clark was declared RN Novice speed sailing champion and took home the overall prize as Weymouth Speed Week's fastest 'first-time amateur'.

Equally as importantly six Royal Navy sailors took part in competitive windsurfing for the first time.

More details on the sport are available at www.rnsa.net or from Cdr Nic Dodd at Nic.Dodd289@mod.uk.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, FRPU East

